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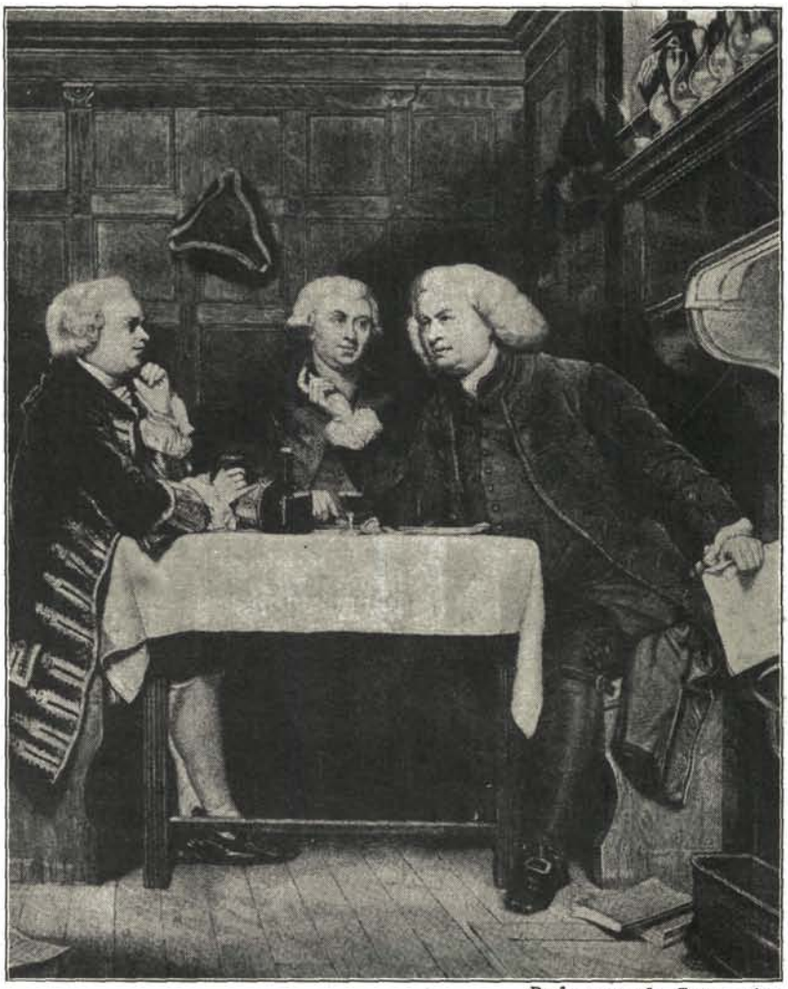

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BOSWELL, GOLDSMITH, AND JOHNSON AT THE MITRE TAVERN

"Most of the alterations were made in the interest of personal delicacy, elegance, . . . or decency. Sometimes they are for the worse, sometimes even for the better . . . "

(See page 5)

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Sut Lovingood

"A Nat'ral Born Durn'd Fool" and His Creator, George W. Harris

BY WALTER BLAIR

IT is easy enough to understand why the writings of George Washington Harris (1814-1869) of Knoxville, Tennessee—newspaper and magazine stories published in the forties, fifties, and sixties and a book, "Sut Lovingood," published in 1867—were not in their day highly regarded as literature. They were not what the readers of that era thought literature ought to be.

In the book, which bore the sub-title, "Yarns Spun by a Nat'ral Born Durn'd Fool," Sut, the fictional character who told the yarns and who assumed the hero's role in most of them, was a lank and lazy Tennessee yokel who mentioned, in the course of a summary of his most important traits, that he had "nary a soul, nothing but a whisky proof gizzard, sort of like the worst half of an old pair of saddle bags." He was not concerned with religion (which he thought funny) or with moral scruples (of which he did not think at all). His chief aim in life was suggested by the fact that his outstanding taste was what Mr. Franklin J. Meine calls "his keen delight for Hallowe'en *fun*." "Sut," continues Mr. Meine, "is simply the naive roughneck mountaineer riotously bent on raising hell." And in Sut's accounts of boisterous pranks he played never was it suggested that they should inspire anything but amusement.

Thus, in a day when it was generally thought proper to freight writings with moral teachings, Harris created a-moral literature. Nor was this his only sin. Almost as objectionable, at the time, as a lack of morals in his tales was a lack of manners, of taste, an uncouthness which caused Victorian propriety to wriggle uncomfortaby. The writhing, perhaps, was not without reason: even today, like the writings of Rabelais these tales will not delight many feminine readers. To the good Victorians the illustrations of the book hinted immediately at its distastefully uncouth quality. Here was Sut's pudgy father, quite naked, racing just ahead of a swarm of hornets across a field; here was a grim-mouthed man preparing to swing a paddle on the nether portion of a youngster which projected through a ceiling; and here was fat old man Burns, looking terribly uncomfortable as he sat insecurely astride a kicking, bellowing bull. The tales justified Sut's claim that he could "get into more darned misfortunate scary scrapes than anybody, and run out of them faster, by golly." Physical discomfiture was a constant theme. Angry wasps which interfered with business or social activities of various people, lizards surreptitiously placed in the pantaloons of a preacher who thereupon disrupted a camp-meeting—these and similar agencies were usually inciting forces in the Lovingood comedy. Worse than the descriptions of these happenings, according to contemporary etiquette, was Sut's outrageously specific way of talking about sex, a topic with which, according to the best people, literature should not deal.

"EAVESDROPPING A LODGE OF FREEMASONS"
From "Sut Lovingood" (1867).

Furthermore, much of Sut's language was an affront to Victorian rhetorical elegance. Harris's phonetic cacography attempted to reproduce a homely dialect which in itself must have seemed barbarous to anyone used to the polished phrases of nineteenth century literature. Consider just this one sentence, in which Sut confessed a mildly sadistic tendency:

> . . . no odds how good yu is to yung things, ur how kine yu is in treatin em, when yu sees a littil long laiged lamb a-shakin hits tail, an' a-dancin staggeringly onder hits mam a-huntin fur the tit, ontu hits knees, yer fingers *will* itch to seize that ar tail, an' fling the littil son ove a mutton over the fence amung the blackberry briars, not tu hurt hit, but jis' to disapint hit.

Such a sentence displayed what must have seemed a disgusting disregard for grammatical rules and rhetorical cadences; it revealed an attitude contrary to sentiment, and it mentioned matters not seemly in the literature of the time. No wonder the better critics of the day ignored Harris's book or damned it, while its purchasers (evidently numerous, since the book continued to be in print during five decades) carefully hid it away between readings.

The appraisal of Harris made by his contemporaries, twentieth century critics evidently have been willing to accept; at least his writings are still unknown to many American literary historians and unpraised by most of them. Mr. Meine's criticism in "Tall Tales of the Southwest," quoted above, is uniquely appreciative; usually in histories the Knoxville writer, if he is mentioned at all, is dismissed in a phrase.

Today, however, several tenets of nineteenth century criticism by which Harris was condemned are no longer approved. A-moral literature is no longer frowned upon; coarseness and bad grammar are

Next Week

NOBLE BOYS
By CLARENCE DAY

REVIEWS OF THE NEW CHILDREN'S BOOKS

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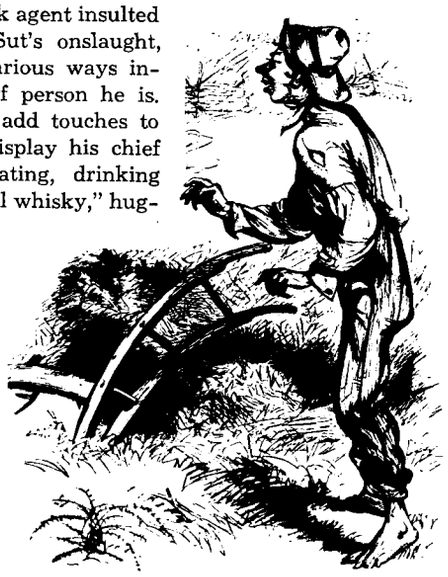
not, it appears, such damning faults as they used to be. At least we are willing to condone them if the writings which contain them have something admirable to offer. Harris, with all his crudities, some of which will be no more endearing to moderns than they were to Victorians, does have much to offer. Reappraisal of his work suggests that he deserves recognition as perhaps the most representative and probably the finest of the great pre-Civil War group of humorists active in the old Southwest—the group from which Mark Twain learned much of his artistry. For the reader who spends a little time learning to read Sut's dialect, who is as tolerant of coarseness as the appreciative reader of Chaucer and Shakespeare, and who properly evaluates Harris's artistry, will find that this humorist's tales have several real values.

They have the value, for one thing, of admirable regional writing. Brilliantly they preserve the costumes, the ways of talking, the customs of Tennessee mountaineers in the middle of the last century. The monotony of their plots is relieved by the variety of scenes which exhibit not only the life of the Lovingoods in their hovel but also weddings, lodge gatherings, negro funerals, quiltings, camp meetings, and other Tennessee happenings. When Harris writes a description of a frolic in the Knobs, he implies that it is unique among social affairs; when he tells of a quarter race (in his best sketch, still unpublished in any book), he depicts it with loving detail; and in tale after tale, he has Sut vividly project the life of his neighbors. Additional variety is provided by the wide range of local characters.

They have the value, also, of highly effective humorous characterization. Minor characters come alive by virtue of thumbnail sketches and the use of much dialogue. Better still, however, is the very complete picture of Sut made possible by Harris's narrative method, the use of the framework device for telling stories. This technique, as old, of course, as "The Canterbury Tales" and "The Arabian Nights," is here very useful. By letting Sut unfold his yarns in his own words and also by picturing the youth and his listeners for the reader before, during, and after the telling of a yarn, Harris is enabled to individualize his hero by direct description, by indirect description (*i.e.*, the effect of the story upon the listeners), and by a lengthy and highly characteristic monologue, in which, revealingly, the tastes and imagination of Sut are displayed.

In the framework, Sut appears as a "queer looking, long legged, short bodied, small headed, white haired, hog eyed" youth, who comes into view at the beginning or the conclusion of various sketches —reining up his bow necked sorrel before Capehart's Doggery to yarn with loafing moutaineers, weaving along the road after a big drunk, or stretching at full length by a cool spring at noon. The reactions of the audience to the yarns are illuminating: a rat-faced youth who is conquered by Sut's rough badinage, "George" (Harris), who tolerantly encourages the yarns even when awakened to hear them, the book agent insulted and frightened by Sut's onslaught, others affected in various ways indicate the manner of person he is.

The tales he tells add touches to the portrait. They display his chief passions—yarning, eating, drinking "cork-screw kill-devil whisky," hugging pretty girls, and "breeding scares among darned fools." Just as illuminating are his dislikes — Yankee peddlers, Yankee lawyers, Yankee scissor grinders—any kind of Yankees, sheriffs, most preachers, learned men who use big words or flowery language, and reformers. His primitive idea of humor characterizes him: a comic situation, he feels, is one in which a character, or preferably a large number of characters, gets into highly uncomfortable circumstances. Comic to him, too, are procreative and bodily functions, the animal qualities of humans and the human qualities of animals.



SUT LOVINGOOD

And the racy language of the tales, their chief attraction perhaps for those who appreciate imaginative phrasing, help reveal his character—a language polished little by book larnin', Rabelaisian, close to the soil, but withal poetic in an almost Elizabethan fashion. The figures of speech he employs are conceits which are characterizing devices because they rise with poetic directness from the life Sut knows. Consider these passages, redolent of Sut's knowledge of nature and his equally thorough knowledge of liquor groceries:

> Bake dwelt long on the crop of dimes to be gathered from that field; [saying] that he'd make more than there were spots on forty fawns in July, not to speak of the big gobs of reputation he'd bear away, shining all over his clothes, like lightning bugs on a dog fennil top.

> . . . her skin was as white as the inside of a frogstool, and her cheeks and lips as rosy as a perch's gills in dogwood blossom time—and such a smile! why, when it struck you fair and square it felt just like a big horn of unrectified old Monangahaley, after you'd been sober for a month, attending a ten horse prayer meeting twice a day, and most of the nights.

The use of such language, colored as it is by a way of feeling and thinking, is one of the most effective of Harris's varied devices for richly presenting his chief character, one coarser and earthier, perhaps, than any other in our nineteenth century literature, but at the same time an ingratiating homespun poet. The language serves another purpose: it helps give the tales the quality of comedy. For these conceits—and others even more grotesque — are comic becouse they are startlingly appropriate and inappropriate at the same time. These, combined with salty phrases from the vernacular, with verbs which record actions, with adjectives which are epithets, unerringly stress the hilarious elements in the world created by the playful mind of America's Till Eulenspiegel.

This is a world in which the religious life of the Smoky Mountains is grotesquely warped until it becomes ridiculous, a world in which the squalor, without alleviation and without shame, in which the Lovingood family live somehow becomes very jolly; in which the crowds at a frolic or a quarter race appear in postures and garbs as amusing as those of the earthy and lively figures who crowd a canvas by Peter Breughel. It is a zestful cosmos in which scent, sound, form, color, and motion are not only vividly lifelike but also highly amusing. Here is a mare in that country, whose rider has just shouted, "Get up!"

> Well she did "get up," right then and there, and staid up long enough to light twenty feet further away, in a broad trembling squat, her tail hid between her thighs, and her ears dancing past each other, like scissors cutting. The jolt of the lighting set the clock [which her rider was carrying and which prodded her unmercifully] to striking. Bang-zee-bang-zee-whang-zee. She listened powerful attentive to the three first licks, and they seemed to go through her as quicksilver would through a sifter. She waited for no more, but just gave her whole soul to running from that infernal Yankee, and his hive of bumble bees, rattle snakes, and other awful hurting things, as she took it to be.

Here is a bull on a rampage in a public market—

> . . . just a-tearing, a thirteen hundred pound black and white bull, with his tail as straight up in the air as a telegraph pole, and a chestnut fence rail

(*Continued on page* 16)

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Boswell Restored

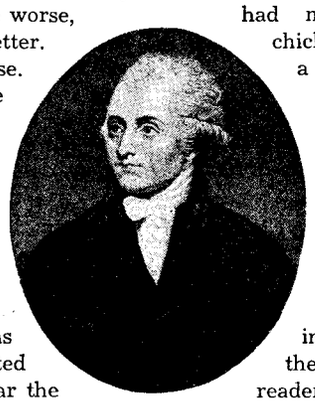
BOSWELL'S JOURNEY OF A TOUR TO THE HEBRIDES WITH SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D. Now first published from the original manuscript. Prepared for the Press, with Preface and Notes by Frederick A. Pottle and Charles H. Bennett. New York: The Viking Press. 1936. $5.

Reviewed by CHARLES G. OSGOOD

We got to Forres at night. Found an admirable house kept by Lawson, wine-cooper from London. By the road I had, from that strange curiosity which I always have about anything dismal, stepped out of the chaise and run up close to the gallows where Kenneth Leal hangs in chains for robbing the mail. As he had not hung but about two months, the body was quite entire. It was still a *man* hanging. The sight impressed me with a degree of gloom. Mr. Johnson did not know of this, or, he told me afterwards, he would not have talked as he did, for he diverted himself with trying to frighten me, as if the witches [from "Macbeth"] would come and dance at the foot of my bed. I said he would be the most frightened of the two. But that I would rather see three witches than one of anything else. I was really a little uneasy. However, the door of my room opened into his. This gave me security, and I soon fell asleep.

ALL good people who invoke the spirit of Dr. Johnson and are well versed in Boswell's "Journal of a Tour of the Hebrides" will peruse this quotation with an eye both familiar and unfamiliar. Clearly it is Boswell speaking —romantic, morbid, curious, dramatic, dependent Boswell. Yet after the first sentence or two nothing of it appears in any text of the "Journal" known hitherto. Everyone remembers the excitement in the Johnsonian world when Colonel Isham acquired the Boswell manuscripts at Malahide Castle in 1927, and the repercussion three years later when another lot turned up there in an old croquet box. In this second lot was found nearly complete, though a bit damaged, the original manuscript of the "Journal" as Boswell wrote it down during the journey, and as Johnson read it, unaltered and unedited; and from that version comes the suppressed passage above quoted. The autograph manuscript is now, after a century and a half, given to the world, and the world may now see for itself all the cancellations, alterations, and insertions which were made in preparing the book for its original publication. The comparison of the two versions is an exciting business.

The manuscript covers the tour very fully from August 21, 1773, to October 25. Boswell brought it to London in 1785, a few months after Johnson died, to prepare it for the press. There he found a timely, and on the whole fortunate support for his dilatory hand in Edmond Malone, and the present editors are convinced that Malone suggested the greater part of the changes. And what are these like? Chiefly abridgments: the manuscript is from a fourth to a third longer than the text (the publisher's estimate of a half appears to me excessive). Nothing sensational seems to have been sacrificed by Malone, and nothing that adds greatly to our knowledge of Boswell's methods in turning the sketch material of his journals into the finished portrait. Most of the alterations were made in the interest of personal delicacy, elegance as Malone understood it, or decency. Sometimes they are for the worse, sometimes even for the better.



EDMOND MALONE

Here is a case of the worse. It was at Dunvegan, where Johnson held forth on what he would do if he kept a seraglio. The manuscript goes on: "To hear Mr. Johnson, while sitting solemn in an arm-chair, talk of his keeping a seraglio and saying too, 'I have *often* thought,' was truly curious." In the printed text this came out: "To hear the grave Dr. Samuel Johnson, 'that majestic teacher of moral and religious wisdom,' while sitting solemn in an arm-chair in the Isle of Skye, talk, *ex cathedra*, of his keeping a seraglio, and acknowledge that the supposition had *often* been in his thoughts, struck me so forcibly with ludicrous contrast, that I could not but laugh immoderately." But this is an extreme instance. Boswell himself suppressed the passage that immediately followed. It must have cost him a pang because it contained one of his best retorts, which is saying much —a retort that fired a magnificent explosion of Johnsonian wrath. He suppressed it for decency's sake, but the curious may now discover it for themselves.

Another sacrifice almost as costly is now redeemed. They were storm-bound at Coirechatachan:

> Mr. Johnson called me to his bedside this morning, and to my astonishment he *took off* Lady Macdonald leaning forward with a hand on each cheek and her mouth open—quite insipidity on a monument grinning at sense and spirit. To see a beauty represented by Mr. Johnson was excessively high. I told him it was a masterpiece and that he must have studied it much. "Ay," said he.

No one can be blamed for suppressing this in the time of it.

At Fort Augustus Boswell notes: "We had mutton-chops, a broiled chicken, and bacon and eggs, and a bottle of Malaga." In the margin he has queried of Malone: "Shall the dinner *Stet?*" But Malone suffered neither this nor many another menu to "*Stet*," though he would doubtless have kept them, had he foreseen how interesting they would be in this year of grace, when the book probably has more readers than ever before.

Most of us will first turn, as I did, to the account of the "collision" at Auchinleck between Dr. Johnson and Boswell's father hoping for more particulars about that cataclysm, on which Boswell is so reticent. But the manuscript adds nothing. Nor does it tell us much more about the encounter of the irrepressible Boswell with the rather inurbane Lady Hamilton, except that some of his sharpest phrases have been rubbed down and softened.

Altogether, when one considers what

Boston and the First Ourang Outang

By ELIZABETH COATSWORTH

NEW YORK society frowned on vice,
Phildelphia too was advanced, but nice,
Of course in Charleston and Baltimore
Life was gay (but proper!) before the war.
'Twas only in Boston Grundy sang:
"Oh, breach the naked Ourang Outang!
"Shall the daughters of Boston blush to see
This uncivilized brute in his nudity?
"Shall the Boston matrons be forced to turn
From an unclothed beast while their blushes burn?
"You have draped with cotton each plaster cast
You have robed in white the Indelicate Past.
"Now men of Boston! An end to the speeches;
For culture! for modesty! Quick! the breeches!"
Mrs. Grundy sang and Boston listened,
Mustaches bristled and glasses glistened,
And a pair of bifurcated drapes
Was straightway affixed to the king of apes.

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was rejected by Boswell or Malone, one wonders the more at what was kept. How did the account of Boswell's getting drunk at Coirechatachan survive, when the exploit at Armadale was excised? Or why was the inspection of the old woman's hut at Loch Ness retained, if the description of their lodging on September 7 was curtailed? But it little matters, now that we have restored the priceless whole.

The book is beautifully designed and printed to conform with the princely edition of the Malahide-Isham papers already issued in eighteen volumes. The editorial work of Messrs. Pottle and Bennett is in all respects a model of care and good judgment, and is worthy of highest applause.

Charles G. Osgood is chairman of the department of English of Princeton University. Among his many books is a study entitled "Boswell's Johnson."

Above 149th Street

ALL BRIDES ARE BEAUTIFUL. By Thomas Bell. Boston: Little, Brown & Company. 1936. $2.50.

Reviewed by FRANCES WOODWARD

THIS is a realistic novel about the proletariat. And not the least admirable thing that Thomas Bell has done in writing it is to put two abused, overworked words back into the meaning the dictionary gives them. Realism doesn't mean the minute recording exclusively of the most unpleasant details of human existence. The proletariat is not a large company of overexcited, underfed radicals who boo outside the Union League Club. The proletariat is simply that part of society which never has had much of any money and never expects to have. Realism is the practice of regarding things in their true nature and dealing with them as they are. "All Brides Are Beautiful" is a realistic novel which is not grimy; a sentimental novel which is not sloppy; a book about people who live in the Bronx and do not speak in low comedy dialect.

The story covers the first two and a half years in the married life of Susan and Peter Cummings. They are very young, very poor, very much in love. And also they like each other, which is quite another matter. They have stout hearts, an ability to laugh, and good digestions. They need them all. It's not a cushioned part of New York, where 149th Street is "downtown."

The book lives. It's a tender, hard-boiled, humorous, romantic, intelligent story. And incidentally a very shrewd picture of why socialism gets recruits. It is unevenly written. There are too many people in it, and it should have been cut; but it is well handled, packed with pertinent detail, and wholly grown-up. A lot of people are going to find it shocking, and a whole lot more are going to be genuinely moved by it.

Arabia Revisited

THE SOUTHERN GATES OF ARABIA: A Journey in the Hadhramaut. By Freya Stark. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1936. $3.75.

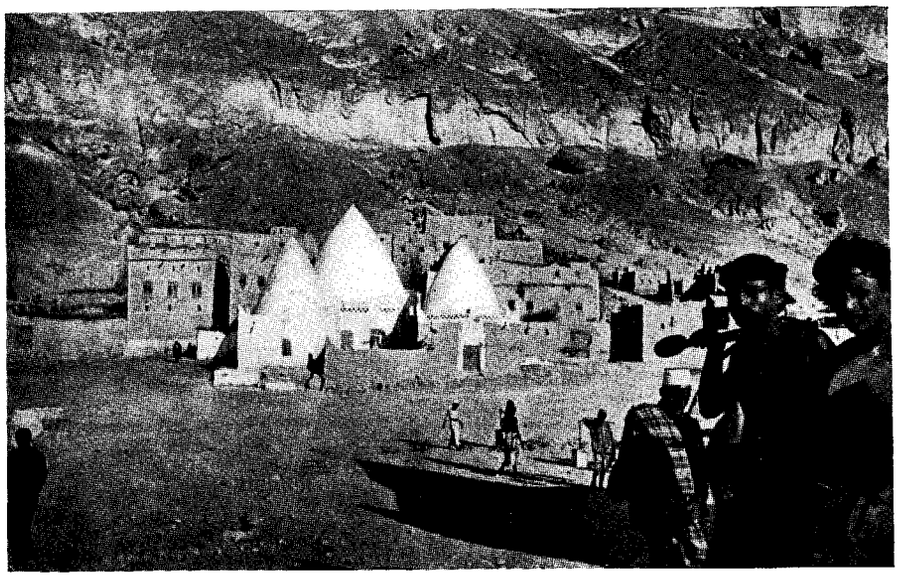
Reviewed by WILLIAM THOMSON

THE romantic mind of our era is filled with a divine nostalgia for old roads; the ancient Silk Road from far Cathay to Constantinople through Bokhara and Samarcand, Tabriz and Brusa, the still more ancient Incense Road from Arabia Felix to Memphis and Babylon through Shabwa and Marib, Taima and Petra. In the dim ages of our world centuries of camels plodded over rocky defiles and wound through pathless deserts to deploy into many-tongued, strangely-garbed marts with their precious cargoes of silk and spices, incense and gems; and a pilgrimage to these deserted shrines of vanished commerce offers an escape from a world grown narrow and grey under the magic wand of modern science into the color and contrasts of a life still young and fresh from contact with primitive realities. Economic history has also its mystical aspects. And this mysticism is the informing spirit of Freya Stark's book.

She has always had a passion for roads or rivers; she rather likes what is quiet and old; and to be the only European within titanic barriers is "happiness, pure and immaterial," "the ethereal essence of happiness." For her "the charm of the Beduin is in his grasp of realities, his genuine aloofness from the trappings of existence," and she feels that "when our human methods of transport are so perfect that physical laws no longer regulate our journeys by land or sea or air, why, then, we shall have outgrown our planet: and that delightful feeling of oneness with its animals and plants and stones, oneness in the grip of the same compulsion, will have gone from our wanderings for ever."

These outpourings of the romantic, mystical spirit give a rare charm and vividness to Miss Stark's style and thought, and they interpret the country and its people for us, as did that other romantic, Doughty, in his "Arabia Deserta." For Miss Stark's mystical romanticism is not mere untutored emotion. It is imagination trained and directed by a very accurate knowledge of her subject. She has scoured literature for data on Hadhramaut and the Incense Road, from the ancient records of Egypt and Babylon through the classics and the medieval Arab geographers down to the books of the latest European travellers. Her introduction shows her mastery of the known material, and a valuable historical essay on the Incense Road forms an appendix to her book. Here the historian of commerce and the archaeologist will find all the available facts set forth clearly and consistently.

Miss Stark's journey did not take her into unbroken territory. Her unfortunate illness prevented her projected trip to Shabwa and beyond to Najran. There is, therefore, nothing new for the geographer in her book, although her descriptions of landscapes and towns are as yet unique in style and detail and her photographs beautiful and not only judiciously chosen, but also—a welcome innovation in a travel book—judiciously placed. One word of criticism may be allowed. Scattered through the book are many Arabic terms and also the names of various trees, shrubs, flowers, fruits, vegetables, birds, etc. It would have added to the value of the book if Miss Stark had included these in her index. Miss Stark's book is not only a very delightful travel book redolent of the reminiscences of history and tradition, it is also a solid and valuable addition to scholarship worthy to be placed beside the works of Philby and Thomas, with whom in one place she crosses swords. For the anthropologist and the historian of customs and costumes it will be invaluable.



THE THREE DOMES OF MESHED. *From "The Southern Gates of Arabia."*

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A Rebel in Reverse

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF G. K. CHESTERTON. New York: Sheed & Ward. 1936. $3.

Reviewed by GEORGE DANGERFIELD

AS the autobiography of an individualist this book, like its author, is as nearly in the first rank as doesn't matter. It is sober and formal to a degree which may surprise those readers (it surprised this one) who do not connect the late G. K. Chesterton with either adjective, but who do connect him with the adjectives "wild" and "absent-minded." In life, he was absent-minded enough to ask for a cup of coffee instead of a ticket at the booking-office of a London station; and in literature he employed the paradox in a way that was peculiarly his own and that might be described as a kind of super-absent-mindedness. For in literary exposition, he was inclined not only to ask for a cup of coffee instead of a ticket, but also to receive a cup of coffee instead of a ticket. But he performed this feat, he discarded dialectics for conjuring, with such a rebellious gusto, with such a rare and unmistakable innocence, that the most stubborn opponent, though not persuaded, was certainly disarmed.

The "Autobiography" is well and carefully built. Its arguments advance the narrative, and the narrative, weaving nimbly back and forth in time, presents us with two clear parallel lines: middle-class parentage, St. Paul's School, no university, art school, journalism (he prefers to give this name to all his writings); agnostic, socialist, anti-socialist, Roman Catholic.

The lines are clear, but the book is not an easy book. It is filled with fun, but it is also deadly serious, and serious to the point of obscurity. On the other hand, it is capable of such magnificent descriptions as "old Haldane, yawning with all his Hegelian abysses," and can draw in a few sentences a character as spare and enduring as that of Johnston Stephen who ". . . once made me the very sensible remark, 'The only little difficulty that I have about joining the Catholic Church is that I do not think I believe in God.'" Chesterton is only obscure when he is being very serious, and it would be unfair to his book not to take the fun before the obscurity.

The book is enormously funny. There is the story of the Four Cowboys which is one of the funniest stories of the century, and which is further embellished with a photograph* almost too remarkable for belief. There is the story of the amiable operative at the Penny Reading, and the story of Conrad Noel and King Solomon David Jesus, and the story of what happened when Belloc first met Henry James. These absolutely unserious situations were the breath of Chesterton's life, and he tells them with a unique mingling of irresponsibility and reverence. They cannot be retold, only read.

From them one gets the feeling that Chesterton was a very loving person, and that the people he loved best were the sincere and singular people who do not belong in groups. He himself was a rebel of a rather curious kind, for he rebelled most against rebels, and ended by advancing to the assault under a standard of unimpeachable orthodoxy. His disgust with imperialists (though keen) was not nearly so keen as his disgust with socialists. It grows harder to discover what kind of a rebel this rebellious person was; and it is from this point of view that his book is obscure.

THE GREAT BARRIE HOAX: *Lord Howard de Walden, William Archer, Barrie, Chesterton, and Shaw, playing cowboys in an Essex field.*

We cannot sit back, as we once used to do, and watch him perform. We have to do some of the work ourselves. Useless to ask him questions while he was performing that kind of magic. But now he has partly put the magic aside; now we start asking: and a very strange thing occurs. We ask for a ticket and we get a cup of coffee. For instance, one chapter is devoted to the Marconi scandal, and anyone who has studied that dismal affair would naturally be interested in Chesterton's account of it. So we ask patiently for the Marconi scandal, and what do we get? We get the late Lord Reading's head in a charger and spattered with mud which, though of a pleasant purplish color, is none the less mud.

The deeper the issues become, the deeper grows the obscurity. Chesterton—who made a valuable study of the relations between party politics and finance, very much to the discomfiture of both—begins an inquiry into the cause of the late war. The reader is all attention. The cause of the late war, Mr. Chesterton proceeds, was Sir Edward Grey's failure to make it clear that England would fight for the neutrality of Belgium. Had Sir Edward made that clear, the war would have been prevented. Does he, perhaps, mean "postponed"? No, he means prevented, and his meaning is unmistakable. And the reason why Sir Edward did not make it clear was because the Liberals were under the control of such pacifist millionaires as Mr. Cadbury, the Quaker.

This is a demi-semi-truth, a tricky kind of truth. Why does Chesterton play such tricks? Because he wants to deceive? Not in the least; and that is why we cannot dislike him. He has been called a romantic radical, but he was really a rebel in reverse, not unlike Wilfrid Blunt. He hated industrial civilization because it is mean and ugly, because it has produced plutocracy, imperialists, socialists, centralization, machines, unemployment, "the sweeping scourges of sterilization and social hygiene," and so on and so on. A radical, even a romantic radical, would have picked on one aspect more than another; but Chesterton hated the whole thing. What he really seems to have longed for is a smaller world altogether, and because that was unattainable he turned industrial civilization into a materialistic devil, and fought against it from the barricades of the Church.

And it is here that there is no longer any obscurity. His mind was rather like a Tudor maze, a labyrinth of clipped and carven hedges; but when you have found your way through the maze of his mind, you discover at the centre something simple and innocent and filled with the light of another world. Is the light an illusion? Perhaps: the religious arguments may not convince us any more than the economic ones. But the point is that they convinced him. They permitted him to solve his own problem, though he never succeeded in settling any other. And even if one thinks of him as sitting on the wrong side of the fence, the thought is unimpressive. With characters such as his, fences do not really exist.

George Dangerfield is the author of "The Strange Death of Liberal England," a book on the Edwardian period.

* *Reproduced herewith.—Ed.*

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The Saturday Review
of Literature

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"Stercoraceous Comment"

PERHAPS you do not understand the phrase. It is a scholarly euphemism which is intended humorously and enables a learned writer in *PMLA* to convey a four-letter meaning without committing vulgarity. Perhaps you do not know what *PMLA* is. Well, in bilious moments it has been referred to as the trade journal of the literary embalming business, but apt as that description may sometimes be, it is not always just. *PMLA* is a quarterly publication of the Modern Language Association, to which most American professors of language and literature belong. The ideal it sets itself is the publication of studies too learned or too profound to find print in the journals of commerce which must nevertheless be permanently added to our culture and made available to generations of students yet unborn. Unhappily it gets too few chances to act upon its ideal. Permanent additions to our culture are uncommon, and when one occurs commercial editors and publishers are prone to snap it up. The result is that *PMLA* tends to be filled with articles of pure scholarship by people who have acquired a technique of research and must use it, articles which seldom have any relation to literature and which are read only by scholars on a busman's holiday. Publication in it counts ten, twenty-five, fifty, or a hundred when a young instructor has been told to publish something for the head of the department to show the dean, or when the dean is looking for someone to fill a vacant assistant professorship. Such efforts may be pious but they do not add to life's benignancy.

The phrase quoted as the title of this sermon occurs in the September number of *PMLA*, in an article called "The Analysis of Literary Situation" by Mr. Carl E. W. L. Dahlström. Mr. Dahlström uses it to describe the verdict of criticism on "The Thirty-Six Dramatic Situations" of Georges Polti, a work intended as erudite analysis of literature but long since forgotten except as one more item which correspondence schools in the writing of the short story may sell to their suckers. Polti's destiny seems harsh and pitiful to Mr. Dahlström, and with a fine impatience he sets out to carry the work in which Polti pioneered toward a happier, more comprehensive, and more scientific conclusion. His object is to determine the total number of esthetic situations available to writers. What is an esthetic situation? One "is born of a conflict between two principal directions of endeavor." A conflict must have something to do with force and Mr. Dahlström finds that there are five kinds, or as he prefers to say, categories, of forces. They are the physical, the organic, the social, the egoic, and the divine, which he will designate *P, O, S, E, D*. If you are going to write a poem, a story, a play, you must necessarily deal with a situation in which these forces are arrayed against themselves or against one another in various combinations. Mark this profundity, however, "The isolation of forces is achieved in the laboratory of the mind rather than in literature. We do not find literature pertaining to man solely as molecular structure; but, on the contrary, things of molecular structure may be personified. So, too, with the other forces; and when we have a character in literature he is frequently an agglomeration of molecules, protoplasm, socius, ego, and soul. Each man is an hypostasis of all, and the differences among men rest in the dominance or weakness of particular forces."

WELL, a simple formula $P \longleftrightarrow O$, gives contention between physical and organic, which might be a doe swimming in a river, or $P \longleftrightarrow P'$, contention between physical and physical, as the raindrop wearing away the stone. Let the doe be wounded by a hunter and we have $PS \longleftrightarrow O$, for "an aggregate of forces may be on one side of the line of opposition with a unit or a similar (or different) aggregate of forces on the other side." Again, "instead of arranging forces in positions indicating successively weaker governance by each, we may devise means of indicating parallel strength," as $P(OS)E \longleftrightarrow D(OS)P$, which gives Ixion's wheel or a delayed buck behind a running guard.

After a series of complicated mathematical distributions, including correction of the basic formula to allow for duplicated oppositions, Mr. Dahlström arrives at this equation:

$$N_2 = (nPr)(mP'q) - \frac{(mP'q)(mP'q) - (mP'q)}{2}$$

A number of subsidiary equations which cannot be reproduced here are required before he comes to his grand climax, the triumphant issue of his research. Only five categories exist and when n is equal to 5, there are exactly 52,975 different "arrangements of situational forces," which "will represent fundamentally different situations if the n factors are basically different, and if position in aggregates of forces indicates primary, secondary, or weaker stress in a given opposition. If, on the contrary, the n factors are fundamentally similar, the 52,975 arrangements will in great part represent situations which are not basically different."

That is algebra's latest contribution to our knowledge of literature. Mr. Dahlström indicates its usefulness, saying that his calculation "has one important role to play in the discussion of literary esthetics: it points to the infinite variety that is available for the artist." You may have needed that pointer, and surely the artist will be reassured.

THIS IS what happens when the *Minderwertigkeit* of literary scholarship seeks to assuage itself with science. Some honest minds are betrayed into it by logic: the "best" knowledge is exact knowledge, only the sciences are exact, therefore the study of literature had better be scientific. Others retreat into it because of incompetence: unable to deal with literature as an art, they console themselves with a parade of spurious scientific method and terminology. And every one who does, makes the future of literary scholarship more precarious, for he turns a few more intelligent candidates for the doctorate from the English Department to the Department of History.

Neither Mr. Dahlström's results nor even his effort has any meaning. No one who ever wrote a poem began by wondering if all the permutations had been used up. No one ever read, enjoyed, or criticized a poem with the algebra of permutations in mind. No one would get anywhere if he did, as Mr. Dahlström makes clear. His grand conclusion, that a writer has a lot of things to write about, hardly needed algebra and hardly gains from it. His further notes, applying his study to "As You Like It" and other works, are elementary truisms within the capacity of any freshman and have no relation whatever to the square root of minus one.

The writer of these lines is a member of the Modern Language Association and his dues are paid up. By reason of many years' enlistment in the cause it serves, he feels a fraternal affection even for its aberrations. But he wishes that it would sometimes stop considering literary scholarship an end in itself—that it would sometimes move on to the synthesis and criticism toward which all such scholarship is at best only a preliminary step. That may be too much to ask. Scholars capable of more than the preliminary step may be too hard to find, and *PMLA* may have to devote itself chiefly to an endless exhibition of scholarly technique forever detached from the objectives that are supposed to justify it. But surely it need not print and circulate absurdity for absurdity's sake alone. . . . Mr. Dahlström, however, gives us leave to hope. He complains that not many scholars can be interested in mathematical esthetics. Thanks; and no wonder.

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Letters to the Editor: *Criticism vs. Encouragement*

Code Napoleon

SIR:—Your editorial on the reviewers' criticism of pretentious and non-pretentious efforts, is, in my opinion a most vicious expression of a not too exclusive attitude.

Since you yourself admit that there are formulas for acceptances for the various types of literature ("regional" efforts for "first" novels as one example), the writer who persists in writing the unusual has to overcome almost insurmountable obstacles. Why shouldn't he receive a sympathetic criticism?

On the other hand, marketing the non-pretentious efforts is a business. The rules laid down are acceptable to writer, agent, publisher, devotee. Why shouldn't these efforts be judged by a "Code of Napoleon"? What excuse other than "perfection" have they for "life"?

Your editorial is symptomatic of the dogmatic attitude which says: "Let the genius prove himself a genius!" Pray how? Every writer, who today is considered worth reading, has had to battle previous "Codes of Napoleon" for unusual efforts. Yet, how silly! If a writer is really in advance of his times (and great writers presumably are), what technique of criticism, other than an "open mind," can an editor have? Sometimes indeed all the editor can do is "to feel" his way toward the writer. It is a pity that many editors of the past are remembered today negatively—not for their support but for their obstacles they put in the way of a major writer.

The writer of the unusual does not object to adverse criticism. But, editorials such as yours, leave publishers complacent. And, complacency has never advanced literature.

As I've said, not that this attitude is strange to modern criticism; but why should the *SRL* support it?

LOUIS MAMET.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

"Candle Indoors"

SIR:—The review of Miss Helen Hull's "Candle Indoors" by I. T. in your issue of October 24th is written in a tone which is so offensive and in such bad taste that it seems to call for comment. I. T. writes: "But we are afraid that she (Miss Hull) is one of those women who sit upstairs in the Astor bar after the theatre and order sweet-tasting cocktails." This is not only gratuitously insulting but also entirely irrelevant and wide of the mark. Perhaps Miss Hull's outstanding virtue as a writer, outside of her expert technical equipment, lies in a certain astringent and critical quality which is almost completely objective and forthright. Anyone who can find a sugary content in "Candle Indoors" or in any of Miss Hull's last half dozen novels, is a remarkable literary chemist

In addition, if I. T. is competent as a reviewer (which incidentally I take leave to doubt), she might be expected to know something of Miss Hull's record—that she just missed the Pulitzer Prize for one novel; that she wrote "Heat Lightning" on a Guggenheim Fellowship and that it was a choice of the Book-of-the-Month Club; that she conducts at Columbia University one of the most successful short story courses in the country; and that her whole personal and professional life has been highly competent and successful.

There may be a few metropolitan readers who will make something out of "sweet-tasting cocktails at the Astor bar," but I should think to a great majority of your readers, apart from its bad manners, this would mean nothing as a reference. It is surprising and painful to find this sort of thing in a review as distinguished and as well-edited as *The Saturday Review.*

THOMAS R. COWARD.
(Coward-McCann, Inc.)

New York City.

"JUST WRITE 'TO GWEN FROM JOHN.'"

Charles Lloyd

SIR:—I am engaged in collecting materials for a life of Charles Lloyd (1775-1839), poet and novelist, the intimate friend of Coleridge and Lamb, well-known also to other Lake Poets and, later in life, to "Christopher North" and William Macready. For this work I am anxious to discover and receive permission to use information found in rare and obscure books and in unpublished manuscripts, of which latter there are several extant by his hand.

Most important Lloyd manuscripts are the masses of family papers found in Birmingham and in Nottingham in 1894; five folio volumes of diaries and unpublished poetry sold at auction by Hodgson in London in 1929; two complete manuscripts of "Isabel," in two 4to. volumes each.

I should be very grateful if any one of your readers who possesses Lloyd material or who has information concerning him, would communicate with me at the address below. Any letter or document sent will be carefully copied and returned promptly with grateful acknowledgment.

(MISS) JOYCE L. KELLOGG.
350 Elm Street,
New Haven, Conn.

Speaking for the Ghost

SIR:—"Has the experiment ever been tried of having the Ghost's lines uttered by Hamlet himself?" (Bowling Green, October 24.)

Yes, by John Barrymore. Magnificently and surprisingly over the radio. The Father and Son scene dialogue read very well, then at the end a surprise announcement by Barrymore that he played both parts. Astonishment and delight. You should have heard it.

PHILIP C. DUSCHNES.

New York City.

Massey's Hamlet

SIR:—Having Hamlet speak the lines of the Ghost has already been tried out in Norman Bel Geddes's production. Raymond Massey spoke the lines intelligently if not poetically, but the effect was not very satisfactory. One difficulty is that the soldiers and Horatio see the Ghost, too.

IRVIN POLEY.

Germantown, Pa.

Keep the Double-Crostics Hard

SIR:—Permit me to disagree with D. S. Ogburn's letter of October 17 as to the enjoyability of difficult Double-Crostics. If they were set-ups, like the commuters' cross-words, there would be no challenge, no stimulus, and (for me) no enjoyment.

HUGH TH. MILLER.

Columbus, Ind.

(The majority of correspondents agree with Mr. Miller. Failing further vocal or written support for the original protest, Double-Crostics will remain as difficult as they have been.—Editor.)

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The Vindication of a Realist

THE LIVES OF TALLEYRAND. By Crane Brinton. New York: W. W. Norton & Company. 1936. $3.

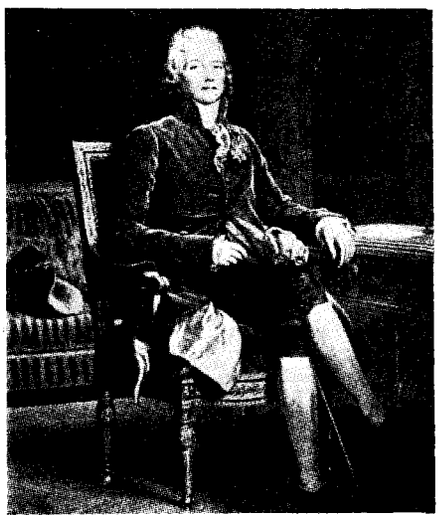
Reviewed by ELMER DAVIS

HERE is a title that suggests a cat, and cat-lovers will find much in Talleyrand that reminds them of their favorite animal—his dignity, which yet would stoop to conquer, his astuteness, his love of pleasant living, his remorseless realism. Not for the cat the blind and often stupid loyalty of the dog; the cat frankly looks out for himself first, but such is his nature that his self-interest is usually entirely compatible with increasing the amenity of life for others.

So with Talleyrand, who to Professsor Brinton's disgust has gone down in history as a "bad" man, yet in his lifetime did much to make Europe more decently livable. Siéyès is remembered because, during the French Revolution, he lived; so did Talleyrand but he lived much more dangerously and more successfully. Siéyès wrote constitutions; Talleyrand worked them, and when they no longer corresponded with realities overthrew them. "Lives" is the proper title for a man who was successively the contented subject of a despotism, then a constitutional monarchist, a republican, a Bonapartist, a Legitimist, and an Orleanist; and to say that he was first, last, and always a Talleyrandist is to simplify a little too far. There were things that Talleyrand would not and did not do, but when he drew the line he drew it on scientific, not on moral principles; he never threw himself into something that obviously would not work, even if he could have found a considerable immediate profit in so doing.

This then is the biography and the vindication of a realist. Professor Brinton's general estimate of Talleyrand is not so very different from that offered a few years ago in Duff Cooper's excellent biography. Through all his changes, Talleyrand was consistently a good Frenchman and a good European; he wanted his country to be prosperous and powerful but he knew that France could not abolish Europe and could not live decently unless Europe had a chance to live with reasonable decency too. When the people went haywire in 1792, when Napoleon went haywire in 1808, Talleyrand simply stood aside until circumstances again gave sane men an opening.

The difference between Cooper and Brinton is largely a matter of expertness; Cooper writes more generally, more simply, often more amusingly; Brinton writes far more exactly, with constant discriminations that will be valuable reminders for the general reader. That worthy person knows that the eighteenth century was dry, tight, skeptical, rational; and the eighteenth century made Talleyrand. But it also made Danton, Robespierre, Murat, Bernadotte (only God could make Napoleon); which suggests that the eighteenth century was by no means a cultural and temporal unit in which certain opinions and attitudes were held *semper ubique et ab omnibus*. The earlier eighteenth century, which shaped Talleyrand's cultural background, conforms pretty well to the common idea; but the decade that made the conditions which he had to face in public life was very different. Skeptical rationalism was hardly the dominant trait of the age in which Cagliostro flourished; indeed, the spirit of Paris salons in the seventeen eighties seems to have been much like that of Bloomsbury and Greenwich Village in 1912-14. In each case, Man and the Social



TALLEYRAND (*Portrait by Gérard*)

Order were regarded not only as perfectible but as about to be perfected, and the early advent of the millennium was demonstrated by an intellectual synthesis which omitted only one factor, the nature of the human race.

The principles of the seventeen eighties were put into practice in the seventeen nineties, and for the next forty years the world was wrestling with the consequences. Talleyrand came through all vicissitudes more successfully than anybody else because he regarded the nature of the human race as the essential factor in the social equation. Men unswervingly loyal to immutable moral principles came to an early end on the guillotine; Talleyrand, aiming always at the reasonable and above all the attainable, stayed alive and helped make life possible for others. Yet "his criterion of success was never the crudely pragmatic one of survival, but the survival of things he valued." He was no Fouché.

Of this course Professor Brinton offers a lengthy defense in his opening chapters, which fortunately are only a sixth of the book. Fortunately, for he seems to be a disciple of Pareto; and the influence of Pareto in this country, on the whole salutary on method, has been deplorable on style. When Brinton writes like Brinton he is easy and pleasant reading, but when he translates Paretian appraisals into liberal-moralistic idiom he becomes a bit viscous. In any case, this defense of Talleyrand seems rather superfluous. There may still be statesmen who need a demonstration that even in politics the scientific approach is likely to be more fruitful than reliance on transcendental truths, but they are unlikely to read scholarly biographies.

And does it matter, at this late date, whether Talleyrand was a "good" man or not? At least a little of the good he did lives after him, the evil is interred with his bones. The nineteenth century called him bad, "less for what he did than for what he failed to pretend to do . . . His greatest sin was success obtained in complete disregard of principles which the nineteenth century professed to regard as essential to success." An age which is living out the consequences of nineteenth century principles does not need to break a lance against that windmill. Professor Brinton easily demonstrates that this would be a more comfortable world to live in if Talleyrand could have substituted for either Wilson or Brockdorff-Rantzau at Versailles (to say nothing of Clemenceau); but the men who make the next peace are likely to be more of the Tiglath-Pileser type.

Yet the apologia is justified after all, for that seems to have been the reason for writing this book, in which one of the most fascinating life stories in history is engagingly retold. Bounce lightly over the rehabilitation chapters if you like; for scattered through the narrative you will find precisions and discriminations that ought to help any reader to think a little straighter.

Walnuts for Brains

THE STORY OF HUMAN ERROR. Edited by Joseph Jastrow. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company. 1936. $3.50.

Reviewed by CLARK B. FIRESTONE

NOBODY ever did anything like this book before, though so-called debunker columns are printed in the newspapers. It was infinitely worth doing, for the story of human error is also the story of man's progress toward an explanation of the universe, as seen from the reverse side of the tapestry. The group of scientists headed by Dr. Jastrow have done their task handsomely and with zest. On some pages of this book, the reader finds himself guest at a sort of Gridiron Club banquet in which serious thinkers poke fun at themselves and their predecessors, back to and well beyond that profound thinker

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who prescribed walnuts for brain trouble because the hard shell resembled the skull and the convoluted kernel the brain itself.

After surveying the colossal scrapheap which the editor and his fifteen eminent scientists have assembled, one is tempted to set opposite it, as of more validity in the evolution of intelligence, an infant's blocks on a nursery floor, and the infant himself. He is the true scientific investigator, and the only one. There is nothing in his mind but curiosity. He believes neither in gods nor devils; nor has he any preconceived theories to vindicate; nor is he under the spell of authority; nor has the tyranny of causes descended upon him; nor has he words to confuse thought. Because of his superb negative equipment, he learns more in a few months than he will learn in all the rest of his life.

The story of human error, as related in this volume—in a series of chapters which begins with astronomy and ends with psychiatry—is the story of what befell the thinkers of history because they discarded the direct methods of infancy. By nature, *Homo sapiens*, whether savage or savant, is an armchair philosopher, given to wishful thinking, bemused by analogy, swayed by pride of opinion, most reluctant to leave the comfortable seat of speculation—beginning his career with the notion that the universe is rather like a traveler's trunk, and concluding now that it is more like a grindstone. He would rather reason than investigate, as witness two of a thousand instances: men accepted the dictum of Aristotle (384-322 B.C.) that a large body falls more rapidly than a small one, until Galileo (1564-1642 A.D.) dropped two such bodies from the Pisa tower, and they reached the earth together; not until about 1600 A.D. did anybody weigh himself before and after eating and discover that the food increased his weight by its own.

Wherefore men have believed in astrology, alchemy, the music of the spheres, uninhabitable zones of climate, a shrunken Atlantic, the mystical Seven (seven planets, seven metals, etc.), the philosopher's stone, phrenology, Freud's bizarre dream-book of sex-symbols, a Golden Age, the Noble Savage, the "state of nature," the "social contract," Aryanism, Malthusianism, touching for the king's evil, rattlesnake oil for rheumatism —and that "night air" is unwholesome because spirits are abroad then and may enter the body and bring disease; ill-tasting medicines were first administered because the interned spirits disliked them just as much as men do.

By an inevitable paradox, this record of error is more informing, illuminating, and useful than perhaps any panegyric of progress could hope to be.

Clark B. Firestone is the author of "Coasts of Illusion," a book devoted to myth, legend, and belief, and more recently of "Sycamore Shores."

Between Waking and Dreaming

THE WIND BLOWS OVER. By Walter de la Mare. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1936. $2.50.

Reviewed by STEPHEN VINCENT BENÉT

> Is there not a shade of the Satanic in these streets? But what are waking and dreaming, my dear sir? Mere states of consciousness; as too in a sense is this, your world of what you call the actual and the one that may await you . . . But the moon of the imagination . . . is still constant in her borrowed light . . .

SO speaks the *revenant* in one of the longest and most characteristic stories in this characteristic collection by Walter de la Mare and his words might well apply to the book as a whole. If you are looking for photographic realism, with its sharp corners, you had better pass on to another booth in the fair—there is none to be had at this one. This is a world between waking and dreaming, sometimes partaking of the nature of both.

WALTER DE LA MARE

One story, "In the Forest," is pure nightmare (is there not a shade of the Satanic in these streets?) and one, "A Nest of Singing Birds," as pleasant a little sunny-showery comedy of a young, foolish, well-meaning poet as one might ask. And then there is "Physic" which, decidedly, has a plot, though the plot is less than the story. But, over them all, the moon of the imagination sheds its own light. And to assess them in the usual manner is rather like trying to pick up quicksilver—it has run away in a hundred small, shining drops the moment your fingers have closed upon it.

Perhaps you do not like ghosts, epitaphs, nurses, children, unpeopled churches, deep green gardens, old silent houses, and the thoughts that come in the world between waking and dream. In such a case, keep away. Or, perhaps you have a bent for these things—then come in, the gate is open. The landscape will be a little different under the moon—sometimes lovely, on occasion more sinister, but the moon is impartial. And the people you will meet are not quite the people of this world, though now and then they pretend to be very skilfully. But, as Mr. Phelps remarks to his curious visitor in "Strangers and Pilgrims," "But there, the human eye, sir, can be a great deceiver."

Walter de la Mare has always made his own world—and his prose is as characteristic of it as his verse. It is always the prose of a poet—the prose of imagination. This collection of short stories does not quite attain the elvish power and intensity of "The Memoirs of a Midget," nor does it reach the pure magic of his finest verse. But it is the product of a unique and scrupulous imagination, and some of it has the taste of linden-honey. That is rare, in this present world, and there never is much of it. But it is remembered and recalled.

Native's Return

COURT-HOUSE SQUARE. By Hamilton Basso. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1936. $2.50.

Reviewed by JONATHAN DANIELS

ALAS for Hamilton Basso. He's a lost young man and I think being lost he is more typical of awakened young Southerners than any other man who has put pen to paper. Awakened, he is still unwilling to put an end to dreaming. Aware of ugliness in the South, angry at injustice and intolerance and exploitation, nevertheless the Southern legend, the langorous Southern living, the camellias and the earth still through his senses and his memories pull his heart. An intellectual in revolt, he is a poet in remembering. No wonder his "Court-House Square" is brilliant in idea and bright in image but too much torn, formless, and uncertain.

It is not necessary to suggest that this book is autobiographical to say that its David Barondess is Hamilton Basso. Probably the details of the life of the writer and the details of the life of his character are wholly dissimilar. But this Barondess, half-lost Southerner who returns in unhappiness to seek serenity in his South, is not only man for Basso but man for a great many young men who grew up in the South late enough to escape the full binding power of the legend which covered every dark thing, but late enough also to see through its loveliness things that were neither lovely nor just nor noble. An earlier generation was blind to such things. A later generation may see clearly to their removal. Basso and his Barondess are unhappy and uncertain between them.

It is a strange lostness. They see so clearly. And yet the harsh melodrama of their story of the impact of intolerance upon decency is thin stuff beside the pattern of life that remains like last year's wreath about the stone statue in

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HAMILTON BASSO

the courthouse square of old, dead Cincinnatus Quintius Legendre who out of the same loins sired mean white men and a magnanimous mulatto. There is no questioning the sympathies of Mr. Basso, and yet the camellias, which in New York are the symbol of his country and its living, seem in the end more substantial than the postulating of his hero in protest or the bad acting of his villains in murderous intolerance. The poet Mr. Basso is in love with the South. But the intelligent Mr. Basso knows that she can be sluttish and evil. All the same he loves her as some other men have done before. And the sum of his book is in the South's beauty; beside it there is no reality in his description of the South's evil. He has tried to be an honest man; but he is a man in love with a land and his honesty is less convincing than his adoration.

Stories of the Occult

SHOCKS. By Algernon Blackwood. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1936. $2.50.

THOUGH the supernatural is the common theme of most of these stories, they are not, for the most part, of the shocking or blood-curdling kind. Mr. Blackwood, who has long been known as one of the most consistently successful of authors in this difficult field, has become more and more interested in what one may call the philosophy of the preternatural—the ideas of different times existing simultaneously, and of rewards and reconciliations to be achieved by the soul. These, with the theme of apparitions caused by the impact of some one else's emotional state, form the subject of nearly all these tales; and the result is that the present collection is somewhat repetitious, even in itself, and doubly so to those who have read Mr. Blackwood's other recent books. But although Mr. Blackwood has formerly seemed a better artist, in his present work he impresses one as a sincere and illuminated student of the occult.

Kittredge's Edition of Shakespeare

THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SHAKESPEARE. Edited by George Lyman Kittredge. Boston: Ginn & Co. 1936. $6.

Reviewed by TUCKER BROOKE

THIS is a very pleasant volume, despite its weight of four pounds and its 1561 pages. It contains all the works in the Shakespeare canon, plus "The Two Noble Kinsmen," and a welcome though laconic summary of Mr. Kittredge's learning on most of the pertinent subjects. This commentary is rigidly restricted to two pages (1200 words) on each play, far too little to illustrate fully either the multifarious activities of modern criticism or the editor's individual opinions; but words could hardly be more thriftily employed, and on some questions —folklore sources and analogues, for example, these artfully crammed introductions contain hints of primary importance. They contain occasional dogmatic aperçus also that make one wish for more.

In regard to the argument that "Romeo and Juliet" must have been written in 1591, because England experienced an earthquake in 1580 and the Nurse in the play refers to one that occurred eleven years previously, Mr. Kittredge remarks: "Doubtless Shakespeare thought of the London earthquake when he wrote the Nurse's speech, but his concern, like hers, was to determine Juliet's birthday, not to hand down to posterity the date of his drama." Concerning the charge that "Julius Caesar" lacks unity, he says boldly: "Caesar vanquishes Brutus and Cassius at Philippi as truly as he vanquished Pompey at Pharsalus. Antony and Octavius are not Caesar's avengers; they are merely Caesar's agents; he avenges himself." And of the "Chronicle History of King Leir" he puts in a neatly economical sentence all that students of Shakespeare need to know; "Shakespeare owes little to the old play except the impulse to write a new one." Such bits conserve a good deal of the aroma of the admirable lectures from which they have been distilled.

The order in which the plays are printed is that of the Folio; the text is Professor Kittredge's own, and as no list of variant readings is supplied, its quality could be determined only by slow toil. It appears, as one would suppose, to be a sensibly eclectic text, willing to cut Gordian knots pretty freely and unwilling to trust the late bibliographical methods very far. The famous "run-awayes eyes" of "Romeo and Juliet" is simplified into "runaway eyes," Hamlet's "noble substance of a doubt" into "noble substance often dout," and Ferdinand's "most busy lest when I do it" into "most busiest when I do it." Another syntactically complex passage in "Hamlet" is thus ironed out,

He was a man, take him for all in all.
I shall not look upon his like again.

There is something of the steam-roller about these, but it makes the lines behave. Altogether, this is a book to be thankful for, whether one considers its richness in learning and common sense or the paucity of observed errors. The Countess of Auvergne (in 1 "Henry VI") is made a duchess, and richly deserves the promotion; Queens' College, Cambridge, is spelled as if it were the foundation at Oxford; a very few references seem to be misprinted. What first edition of a book on Shakespeare has had such negligible blemishes?

"Gigger"

SCHOOLDAYS WITH KIPLING: The True Inner History of Stalky & Co. By G. C. Beresford (M'Turk). New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1936. $3.50.

Reviewed by HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

THIS vivacious book is an account of Kipling's school days at Westward Ho, the army school where he was sent when, as a child, he came home from India. It is a good deal more than biography. Indeed, if Kipling, or Gigger, as he appears in this book, named from his gig-lamp spectacles, were not the hero, it would still be a good book. It is a fine account of an English public school, full of humor, penetrating in its criticism, but just to the excellent qualities of that famous variety of education. Kipling appears in a light which even "Stalky & Co." had not prepared you for. He is a young intellectual, a little snooty from the influence of the Pre-Raphaelite salons in which his family moved, but so good-natured and so ingenious, that he never suffered in the school from being conscious of his brains. Indeed the book is one long narrative of the devices by which Gigger escaped from athletics, hard study, and everything else that did not appeal to him in the school. It is a very objective biography. One feels that the boys at school knew very little of Kipling's inner psychological processes, and that Mr. Beresford knows very little more now. But this much is evident. He was a happy boy, and it is more than probable that his happy childhood accounts for much in his later differences from an oncoming generation that tried to turn true romance inside out to get at the seamy side. It is interesting, too, to see that Kipling at this stage was a skeptic, a sophisticate inclined to sneer at patriotism, empire, and all big words of the time. Beresford thinks his change was not due to an attempt to capitalize on the new mood of imperialism, but rather to the inescapable influence of India. This and various other attempts in the book to psychologize Gigger are of doubtful value. But there is no question as to the charm and authenticity of this book.

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The Bowling Green by Christopher Morley

Of Time and the Reader

READING these long-winded novels,
some people are going gaga.
What this country needs is a good five-
cent saga.

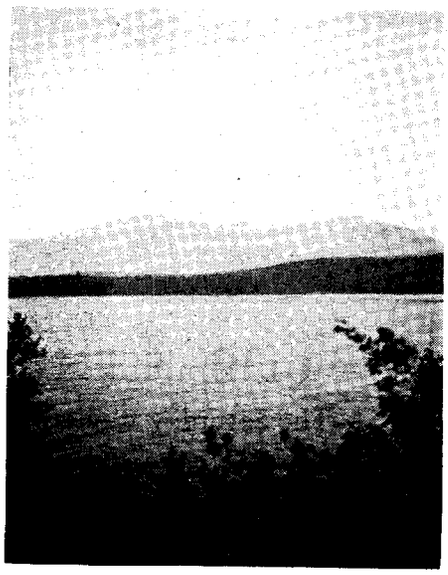
DAVID MCCORD.

Ampersands

We have so often remarked that the best textbook of literature is an atlas, you will not be surprised at our listing as an ideal Christmas present the inexpensive *Mapbook of English Literature* compiled by Messrs. Briscoe, Sharp, and Borish. It is published by Holt ($1.50). It gives clear and careful maps which identify the literary residences and allusions in various chronological periods, and also maps of special regions (London, the Lakes, Wessex, the universities, Ireland, etc.) &&& We've been enjoying occasional reference to this admirable little book, and hope the editors will follow it up with a sequel for the U. S. and Canada. &&& The only serious omission we have noted is that the map of London does not include any mention of Sherlock Holmes on Baker Street. &&& That reminds us: it has been a great pleasure to receive several letters indicating that Conan Doyle's *Through the Magic Door* (a book about literature) is by no means forgotten. &&& Mr. James Keddie writes from Boston that he believes he can establish that Mrs. Hudson of 221 B Baker Street had another lodger besides Holmes and Watson. We eagerly await details. &&& The Netherland-America Foundation sends us a list of its eminent Erasmus Committee to honor (at Columbia University on November 18) the fourth centennial of Desiderius Erasmus, who died in 1536. We often think gratefully of Erasmus, for in his letters (edited by P. S. Allen) we found a phrase that we painted on the cornice of our rustic Knothole. It is the best motto we ever discovered for library or bookplate: *Assiduus sis in bibliotheca quæ tibi Paradisi loco est.* &&& Incidentally, in answer to friendly correspondents who write offering to exchange bookplates, we have none and never expect to. It would be far too much nuisance to paste them in; if we really like a book we write our name in it and let it go at that. &&& It will shock the literary-minded, but to the tough and grizzled practitioner of books, a personal ex-libris plate seems too often a dilettante and pantywaist sort of affair. &&& We borrow the noble epithet "pantywaist" from a young lady (aged 14) in Albany who uses it as condemnation for anything that seems to her to savor of sorority and show-off. &&& We add to our Christmas List Fairfax Downey's *Portrait of an Era* with its fine reproductions of Charles Dana Gibson's drawings. &&& We were interested to note that the posthumous book of Housman's poems is copyrighted by Barclay's Bank: are there any other instances of poems administered by a banking house? &&& In a brief but delightful visit to Williamstown the words of Melville's dedication in *Pierre* kept coming to mind: *To Greylock's Most Excellent Majesty.* &&& Also we learned that the bibliophiles of the Williams College Library are constantly besought for the provenance of the inscription on the Hopkins Memorial Steps. The lines are:—

Climb high
Climb far
Your goal the sky
Your aim the star

No one has ever spotted the source of the verse, and there is still the haunting fear that it might prove to come—like that



AMPERSAND, *Mountain and Lake, N. Y.*

inscription at Yale—from Sabatini. &&& Paul Bennett very kindly sends us the photo of Mount Ampersand (N. Y.) we have long desiderated.

Extracts from Letters

Between the 8.30 A.M. class and the 11 p.m. French lesson I am writing another novel and greasing our old leather books with vaseline. That's a delightful occupation. The rusty hinges of the mind become lubricated too, and let in peaceful placid reflections.

D. G., Pittsburgh, Pa.

American libraries have done a valiant work during these years of depression. Books in public libraries were one of the last few commodities left available to those who, through no fault of their own, suddenly found themselves stripped of resources and hopes. Thousands of American men and women have voluntarily testified to us that library books have helped to save their sanity, helping them to forget—even sometimes to solve—their economic problems.

Now our American libraries need help. Appropriations are being cut by Boards of Finance who do not always sense the irreparable harm they may be causing by cutting off library facilities in communities that today need them more than ever before. The Library Committee is trying to awaken in the consciousness of America the tremendously important role that public libraries play in the average person's life.

M. A. C., New York City.

Books on Bowling

The Franklin Club of Elizabethton, Tennessee (its letter-head says "Named in Honor of *The Lost State of Franklin,* 1784 to 1788") has become interested in lawn bowling. They found plenty of books about the game published in England, but the American literature of the subject is scanty. However they discovered a pamphlet published (1925) by Charles G. Blake & Co., Chicago. Its title is pleasing: *Lawn Bowling Handbook—The Game That Keeps Men Young.* It should have a large sale.

Professor Winchester

Early this summer we happened to mention that the Caliph A. Edward Newton spoke with enthusiasm of the late Professor C. T. Winchester's *An Old Castle and Other Essays.* Harry T. Baker of Goucher College kindly sends us a reprint of an article he wrote five years ago in *The English Journal* recalling, at the time of Wesleyan University's centennial, Winchester's services in that college. From this we quote:—

"His greatest secret, I think, was that he could enforce literary discipline without yielding to the common fallacy of information-worship. He never encouraged a tendency to collect and recite mere details of fact about an author's life or books. He awakened, rather, an enthusiasm for aesthetic judgments and an enthusiasm for ideas. Believing that the formation of literary taste and judgment is the supremely important thing in the teaching of literature, he expressed this belief in his book *Some Principles of Literary Criticism,* published in 1899 and still the standard volume in its field. Though intended to be chiefly a textbook, it is much more than that; its charm of style makes it interesting to the general reader. Professor Winchester never announced, but he always implied, that discussion of the characteristics of great literature is

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. . . an animated picture of Down-east Yankee Country-side

*A BOOK
OF REAL AMERICAN HUMOR

It is seldom that books dealing with the *real* Yankee countryman are published, for few authors today know at first hand the distinctive habits of speech, methods of expression and individual homespun philosophies of these old-fashioned people. Yet back in the pockets of the hills these people still persist even if the world does not know them. They are shrewd and capable and deep. They live their own lives and don't give a hoot what others think of them. The author, *Samuel L. Bradbury*, a lecturer and authority on these people, was born in the countryside of Maine and was raised amongst the people he writes of. Thrown into intimate association with older people as a boy, he became closely associated with many of the neighborhood characters now long-since gone, and was thoroughly saturated in Yankee horse sense. These things he has put into this book . . . a very funny and rollicking tale of Hiram Harding of the town of Hardscrabble and the vicissitudes and tribulations met by Hiram and his courting of the Widow Pettengill. A rich mine of American humor.

*Hiram Harding of Hardscrabble

By SAMUEL L. BRADBURY

THE TUTTLE PUBLISHING CO., INC.
RUTLAND, VERMONT

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THE H. W. WILSON COMPANY
950 University Avenue New York City

more important than the kind of research that delves into minor facts about minor, and often completely forgotten, authors. To encourage gusto, yet to discourage carelessness, was his chief aim. He attempted to make intelligent and discriminating lovers of the best literature. That he succeeded is proved by the fact that he received several offers from famous universities. It was a combination of modesty and loyalty that kept him at Wesleyan."

The Englishman's Geography

It isn't often that we admit a publisher's press-note into the Green, but here comes a bulletin from the Macmillan Company. It quotes Mary Ellen Chase, professor at Smith College, in her new book *This England*:—

"A year ago a most charming Englishman, who had been on a brief business trip to Canada and the United States, invited me to a contest. I was to write all the counties of England which I knew, and he as many as he could of the forty-eight States of the Union. Since I have spent much time in England and since my business is the teaching of English literature, I necessarily know that Cumberland is in the Lake region, that Stratford-on-Avon is in Warwickshire, and that Yorkshire does not protrude into the English Channel. My list of thirty out of the thirty-nine English counties was somewhat less than might have been expected of me. Since he had never been before in any part of the United States, and since his mission while there had to do with New York business blocks, it may be that his performance was explainable if not excusable. His list of nine out of forty-eight was as follows:

"1. Vermont (which he pronounced with a French accent)
2. Susquehanna
3. California
4. Philadelphia
5. Ohigho
6. New York
7. Tex-ass
8. Virginia
9. Chesapeake."

An agitation. In the Green of July 11 we quoted Bruce Rogers to the effect that in the Bible, including the Apocrypha, there are 4,631,056 letters.

Now comes the alert Max Schuster who says that on p. 84 of "GLEANINGS FROM THE HARVEST-FIELDS OF LITERATURE: A Melange of Excerpts, Curious, Humorous, and Instructive, collated by C. C. Bombaugh (Baltimore, 1873) you will find a word count and a letter count of all the books of the Bible including the Apocrypha. This calculation shows 3,566,480 letters in the complete book." Here is a discrepancy too serious to overlook; and one which might be costly for Bible publishers.

Mr. Schuster says that the count given in Bombaugh took 3 years; he has heard that it was set as a task for convicts in some English prison.

We can't stop just now to tackle the job ourself, but perhaps Mr. Schuster (whose firm has just published Ernest Bates's rearrangement of the Bible) can get it done as a Federal Literary Project.

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
MR. PINKERTON HAS THE CLUE *David Frome* (Farrar & Rinehart: $2.)	Mr. Pinkerton goes to Bath for holiday, gets involved in complex murder of retired actress, finds the clue.	Narrative style occasionally a bit cloudy, but this ingenious baffler fools you neatly—and fairly.	Very good indeed
AND CALL IT ACCIDENT *Mrs. Belloc Lowndes* (Longmans, Green: $2.)	Rich American girl in England falls into hands of debonair fleecers who almost kill her before it's over.	Gossamer plot spun out to the last evanescent inch of enjoyment by past-mistress of such spinning.	Pleasant
DARK IS THE TUNNEL *Miles Burton* (Crime Club: $2.)	Suspicious circumstances surrounding seeming suicide of English kt. in r.r. carriage set brains of Yard man and helper awhirl.	One of the artfullest and most impenetrable plots in months—even though the murder mechanism is *à la* Rube Goldberg.	A-1 Puzzler
THE CONCRETE CASTLE MURDERS *Francis Gérard* (Holt: $2.)	American gangsters, with tommy-guns, pineapples, etc., invade London and Meredith, C. I. D., finally calls out the British army.	No more alarming mixture of cheap thrills, atrociously Englished American slang, and all round guff has appeared in years.	Zero
ONE MURDERED: TWO DEAD *Milton Propper* (Harpers: $2.)	Phila. matron, rich, reckless, and expectant, murdered in bed. Tommy Rankin uncovers family skeletons in catching killer.	Expert development of an obvious, but dangerous and infrequently tried mystery story device, well documented and crisply written.	Admirable

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The beauty of a great life and work portrayed in a beautiful book

THIS biography of John James Audubon, artist, naturalist, woodsman, written by our foremost authority on the American frontier, will be a delight to readers of all ages. From his earliest beginnings, which are shrouded in mystery (there is some evidence that he was the lost Dauphin), to the end of his eventful life an aura of romance surrounds the figure of Audubon. His burning desire to picture all the birds of America took him from Labrador to Texas, to the rivers and keys of Florida, the Louisiana bayous, the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers, and many times across the Atlantic. A strange, vital person, exotic, handsome, he was one of the most romantic characters America has produced. Audubon could have had no more ideal biographer than Constance Rourke, who has followed his trails throughout the country, and gathered from personal sources much new material to write this, the first full-length biography of Audubon in twenty years. A November choice of the Book-of-the-Month Club. $3.00

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AUDUBON

By CONSTANCE ROURKE

Author of "AMERICAN HUMOR," "DAVY CROCKETT," etc.

"AUDUBON will be for me *the* American biography of the year, both because of its subject and because of its author. Audubon is increasingly understood as one of the geniuses of the old frontier; and Miss Rourke, who knows and loves the frontier and folklore, living and dead, is his ideal biographer." *Lewis Gannett, N Y. Herald Tribune.*

We apologize to Mr John Dos Passos and Mr. Carl Sandburg for the regrettable error of showing Mr Sandburg's, not Mr. Dos Passos's, photograph in our October twenty-fourth advertisement of THE BIG MONEY

Carl Sandburg's
THE PEOPLE, YES
$2.50

John Dos Passos's
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The Amen Corner

The Oxonian has always had a very pleasing response from his readers; but it is not every day that his efforts inspire a poet. Mr. John Holmes, whom we quoted at some length in our last on the subject of Oxford Books[1] has been moved to send us the poem below. When we asked his permission to use it here, he replied: "I can see the small numbers following the name or titles, repeated in the footnote!" ("O, where, my lord?"

"In my mind's eye, Horatio."[2])

So we have taken the liberty of annotating his poem:

What the Books Do

They stand here like a regiment at ease,
Gold-lettered on the black and red and blue,
Waiting for me to read them back to life,
Or shift their ranks to make their honor new.

Their pied and peaceful colors wall the room.
Their titles tell me every passionate ghost
And every blowing landscape shut inside
With words to keep them there, and poetry most.

Herrick[3] with Saki, Donne[4] with old George Moore,[5]
Here, as in heaven, find themselves set down.
Troilus[2] and Tristram Shandy[6] lean one way.
Here Xanadu[7] lies close to Tilbury Town.

Bennett and Chaucer[4] Boswell,[4] Pepys, and Proust
Have come here for the journey's own good sake.
They crowd so close that time is crowded out.
A burning Tyger walks with William Blake.[4]

Valiant-for-Truth climbs up the farther shore
And is with Hamlet[2] and Lord Jim well met.
The Wind blows through the Willows with a song
That Shakespeare[2] heard and Keats[8] could not forget.

Here, though my spirit darken or grow strange
With restlessness, and in the dark seem blind,
The books will wait: they lift more life to me
Than I shall ever leave this room to find.

JOHN HOLMES,
for the OXONIAN.

We are grateful to Mr. Holmes for a column as well as a poem. For we are in a frightful hurry and must be off to the Oxford Booth at the *New York Times* Book Fair to choose our Christmas presents.

One of the first will be *Half the World is Isfahan* by Caroline Singer and Cyrus LeRoy Baldridge, an account of a year in modern Iran with six pages in full color, eight other full page illustrations, and about a hundred marginal sketches, and all beautifully reproduced. You won't believe the price.[9]

THE OXONIAN.

(1) Oxford University Press, 114 Fifth Avenue, New York. (2) *The Oxford Shakespeare.* 1 vol., $1.00. (3) In the *Hesperides Series,* designed by Bruce Rogers. 2 vols., $5.00. Also in the *World's Classics,* 80c each. (Write for complete list!) (4) In the *Oxford Standard Authors.* $1.50. (Write for complete list!) (5) *George Moore,* by Humbert Wolfe. $1.00. (6) In the *World's Classics.* 80c. (7) *Coleridge: Poems.* Ditto. (8) *Keats and Shakespeare,* by J. Middleton Murry. $3.50. (9) $5.00.

Sut Lovingood

(*Continued from page* 4)

tied across his horns with hickory withes. He was a-titing his head low, and every lick he made . . . he'd blow whoff, outen his snout. . . . He'd say whoff! and a hundred and sixty pound nigger would fly up in the air like unto a grasshopper, and come back spread like a frog. . . . Whoff! again, and a boy would turn ten somersaults towards the river. Whoff! and an Amherst woman lit a-straddle of an old fellow's neck, with a jolt that jumped his tobacco out of his mouth and scrunched him, while she went down hill on all fours and a fox trot. . . .

This imaginative comedy is not the only kind found in the tales. In the best narratives, as has been suggested, there is also comedy of character and of situation. In addition, the framework method which Harris uses makes possible comedy arising from the underlining of two sorts of incongruity—incongruity between the grammatical, highly rhetorical language of the framework and the ungrammatical vigorous dialect of the story; and incongruity between realism—discoverable in the framework wherein scene and narrator are portrayed—and fantasy, which enters into the highly colored enclosed narrative.

The first type of contrast is frequently illustrated. Recited in Sut's drawl, with far more touches of dialect than have been indicated (for most of the passages quoted above are translated for rapid reading), Sut's talk consistently is set off by the stiff language of the framework. Harris seems to be aware of the possibilities of ludicrous antithesis of language, for time after time he puts the mountaineer's wild jargon alongside of particularly flowery passages or of learned language full of big words. One example:

". . . an' that very nite [said Sut] he tuck Mary, fur better, fur wus, tu hev an' to hole to him, his heirs, an'—"

"Allow me to interrupt you," said our guest; "you do not quote the marriage ceremony correctly."

"Yu go to hell, mistofer; yu bothers me."

This outrageous rebuff took the stranger all aback, and he sat down.

"Whar wer I? Oh yas, he married Mary tight an' fast, an' next day he wer abil tu be about. . . ."

Still more noteworthy is the incongruity between the realistically portrayed world of the framework and the fantastic world of Sut's stories. Although Harris perhaps does not make as much as he might of this contrast, most of his introductory and concluding sections being rather sketchy, nevertheless, an effect is secured. The world of Sut's stories, placed alongside of the tremendously different world wherein Sut's whisky flask flashes in the sun, becomes more queer, more outlandish, by contrast.

Such are the qualities of the artless appearing narratives written by Harris. These qualities did not come into them by accident, nor were the methods entirely original, for the author was a member of a large group of humorists who attempted to do the same thing he did. An unusual group of authors for nineteenth century America, they had aims unusual for the time. Men of the world, most of them, who moved from place to place, job to job, seeing much of the teeming section they portrayed before they wrote, they jotted down their tales during lulls in strenuous activity. Harris's varied career as a jeweler's apprentice, a riverboat captain, a silversmith, a political pamphleteer, a postmaster, and an inventor gave him the sort of wide experience common to his versatile contemporaries. When such worldlings became authors, they naturally had objectives different from those of the contemporary Brahmins and Transcendentalists of New England, say, or the romantic writers of every section. They shared Harris's delight in local color, in quaint native character, and in physical discomfiture. They were less concerned with moral lessons and with good manners than with amusing their readers. Hence in their writings, as in Harris's, even a rascal or an unmoral loafer, if he was amusing, was affectionately portrayed.

Like Harris, too, in order to amuse, they attempted to adapt to the printed page a narrative form which, in travels and in social intercourse, they had found tremendously diverting—the oral tale. As Andrew Lang perceived, stories which Americans were "eternally swopping" in barrooms, on steamboats, and by firesides became "the subsoil" of their humor, "a rich soil in which the plant . . . grows with vigor and puts forth fruit and flowers." Many of them consequently tried, as Harris did, to tell their tales in just such a manner as the way they had heard them told, with all the directness and poetry of the American language, with all the diverting imaginative flights which characterized the rustic yarn-spinner. And in *The Spirit of the Times,* the magazine in which many of their narratives as well as Harris's appeared, many of them published tales wherein were employed exactly the technical devices which Harris found useful.

In Harris's pages, therefore, the antebellum humor of the old Southwest was summarized. In his pages, also, it reached a climax of excellence. For although he wrote the sort of humor other Southwesterners were creating, his tales excelled the rest, since he had, along with skill in revealing the life of a section and a keen sense of character, greater genius than they for transferring the unique artistry of the oral narrative to the printed page, and because he had more sense of incongruities, more imagination, and greater artistry in language.

The foregoing article is a modified section of the author's introduction to "Native American Humor (1800-1900," *to be published in the American Literature Series by the American Book Company.*

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Thought moves with velocity, energy and telling effect in these flashes of streamlined prose . . . Christopher Morley is here at his many mooded best . . .

Streamlines

by CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

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Sweeps along like a high wind

"DANGER IN THE DARK is not only a swell mystery, but a sound novel—usually there is a distinction. The tale sweeps along like a high wind from the moment Daphne discovers the body in the springhouse to the inevitable but surprising conclusion," says Sterling North, Chicago *News*. By the author of *While the Patient Slept* and *Fair Warning* and other mystery best-sellers. $2.00

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A Journal of Opinion

THE NEW REPUBLIC ANTHOLOGY: 1915-1935. Edited with a Chronology by Groff Conklin. New York: Dodge Publishing Company. 1936. $3.

Reviewed by WILLIAM L. CHENERY

IF Mr. Conklin had claimed less for this selection of articles published during the first twenty years of *The New Republic's* history, the task of the reviewer would be lighter and more gracious. Representative articles, writings of almost one hundred and fifty contributors, have been assembled for reconsideration. Some of the writers are eminent. Some are, or were, great authorities in their special fields. Some are brilliantly gifted. Thorstein Veblen, H. G. Wells, Bertrand Russell, George Santayana, John Dewey, Walter Lippmann, Francis Hackett are conspicuous in the list. Many of the articles reproduced are still pleasant and stimulating so long after the occasions which provoked them have fallen back into the vague array of yesterdays.

Mr. Conklin, the compiler of this book, invites, however, another and more severe scrutiny, when he says: "I have reinforced . . . the idea with which I started . . . that such wisdom, such critical insight as might be found among intelligent people in this and other countries during the war period and after, would be most clearly reflected within the pages of the *New Republic.*" Of course it is not true that such wisdom as might be found among intelligent people in this and other countries has been most clearly reflected within the pages of any single publication. The *New Republic* is fairly comparable to the *Nation* and to the older British weeklies of discussion. It has not been unique.

The funds for the establishment and support of the *New Republic* were provided by Mr. and Mrs. Willard Straight. Mr. Straight was a brilliant young banker, a member of the firm of J. P. Morgan and Company. Mrs. Straight was one of the heirs of the great Whitney fortune. Herbert Croly, the founding editor, was the author of the excellent "Promise of American Life." A gifted staff was assembled. Walter Lippmann, Francis Hackett, and Philip Littell would have been conspicuous on any publication.

From the very beginning the *New Republic* enjoyed great editorial freedom. Commercial success was evidently not sought. At the start the editors were a part of the "brain trust" which had gathered about Theodore Roosevelt's Progressive movement. Later, the *New Republic* expressed sympathy with Woodrow Wilson's policies. After the Versailles Treaty the sympathy with Wilson was less frequently admitted. In recent years liberalism, detached from any party, has been the guiding policy. Although neither socialist nor communist in their latest statement of policy the editors said: "We hope to participate within the ranks of those who believe, as we do, that capitalism has outlived its usefulness." This is far to the left of Theodore Roosevelt's program of social justice.

Somehow the *New Republic* has not exerted a great influence on public affairs or upon public opinion. The old *Nation,* under E. L. Godkin, was much more considered by other journalists. William Allen White's *Emporia Gazette* has been a more accurate index of the tides of American opinion. The editorial page of the New York *World* under the direction of Frank Cobb was a more potent voice. The Louisville *Courier Journal* counted for more when old Henry Watterson spoke. Yet no newspaper or journal has had the services of a brighter staff or been able to evoke the coöperation of a more distinguished group of contributors. Certainly few have been less handicapped by anxieties of the counting room.

The explanation may be found in the editorial policy established at the outset. Herbert Croly preferred to deal with ideas rather than facts. His program was an "attempt to convert criticism into a positive agency of progressive democratic ascendancy." This decision had two important consequences. The ideas which the *New Republic* conveyed were comments based on other people's facts. Inevitably the commentators were remote from matters they discussed. Yet it is necessary to know intimately as much of complicated reality as possible if comments concerning troubled situations are to be wise, discerning, and helpful. Lack of original investigation also deprives the journalist of the emotion and passion requisite to exciting writing. Inevitably the editor who knows little more than can be learned from his morning newspaper lacks fire and color in his own utterances.

This, I think, is the underlying cause of the failure of the *New Republic* to achieve the place in American journalism justified by the qualities of the distinguished men who have made up its staff. Spirited and amusing criticism in the field of literature and the theatre have not proved sufficient to win and hold the attention of the very considerable number of Americans genuinely interested in a free discussion of important public affairs.

In this age certainly the methods of political science are more fruitful than the arguments of political philosophy. The reporter must get the facts of the story before the editor can write the illuminating comment concerning their significance.

In spite of all this, much excellent writing is available in the "New Republic Anthology," and it is pleasant to renew the acquaintance of old friends.

William L. Chenery, editor of Collier's Weekly, *was formerly associate editor of the New York* Globe.

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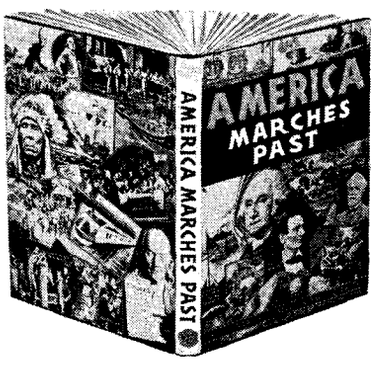

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A Lay View of the Court

THE STORY OF THE SUPREME COURT. By Ernest Sutherland Bates. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co. 1936. $3.

Reviewed by THOMAS REED POWELL

MR. BATES'S conception of his fitness for his task is to be inferred from a footnote toward the end of his book. This footnote relieves a reviewer from reporting in detail the numerous errors and inadequacies noted on page after page during the reading. Had the footnote been offered as a preface, it might have forestalled the annoyance of finding so many departures from certain assumed standards of scholarship. After several glib references to decisions based on technicalities we come to this marginal comment:

> There is no intention, here or elsewhere, to use "technicalities" in a necessarily disparaging sense. In the *Anita Whitney* Case, Mr. Justice Brandeis and Justice Holmes, both presumably in sympathy with the appellant, concurred in the decision. A technical judgment may be strictly necessary or it may be straining at a gnat; in either case, its discussion must be left to lawyers. All that the non-legal historian can do is to record its effects, and if he finds, as he will, that technicalities seem to have a way of multiplying on behalf of the ruling forces in society to indicate that fact also without attempting to decide the vexed question whether the responsibility lies with the courts, the laws, or perhaps the intrinsic nature of the law itself.

There was in one of the stories of the late Mary Raymond Shipman Andrews an amusing incident of a boy who described a football game exclusively in terms of the physical actions of the players. Something might be said in favor of applying this method to the description of war. Such merit as may be accorded to Mr. Bates's achievement must be premised on similar considerations. An enumeration of results that he deems unholy is something well worth thinking about. His enumeration might have been made with more brevity, and he might himself have done more of the thinking about it instead of leaving so much to the reader. Out of fairness to an institution and to the men who have manned it, the enumerator might have included more of the brighter side of the picture. To people perhaps as enlightened as the author and certainly less imbued with conscious legal innocence, the darkness is not so enveloping as he finds it. Results are not to be judged solely by the individual instance. A case may go against a debtor and still be of advantage to thousands who hope to become debtors. One who could be cruel enough to deprive Mr. Bates of some of the joy of his sorrow might prescribe for him a mild dose of enlightenment about what he cavalierly calls "technicalities."

We must take the author's footnote for it that he is not necessarily disparaging. One could hardly gather this from his text. One could hardly gather it from his frequent invocation of the views and the researches of Gustavus Myers and Louis B. Boudin. Even though the greater part of the book is confined to selective reporting, the permeating tone is that of slur and jibe. So the non-medical historian of medicine might write with his view fixed on the prevalence of disease and death. The parallel is a restricted one, for doctors may be impotent where judges are not. The Supreme Court might have decided the other way in a large percentage of the cases before it. With a fixed view of what constitutes legal and economic health, the non-legal historian can slap at the results of contrary views with more assurance than the non-medical historian could slap at medical judgments. Yet even those who believe it highly important that the Supreme Court should be slapped with frequency may deem it equally important that the slapping should be done with understanding and discrimination.

A single illustration of Mr. Bates's lack of understanding will suffice. He quotes Mr. Chief Justice Taney in the License Cases to the effect that the police powers of the states "are nothing more or less than the powers of government inherent in every sovereignty to the extent of its dominions," and that the state's "authority to make regulations of commerce is as absolute as its power to pass health

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laws, except in so far as it has been restricted by the Constitution of the United States" and he than proceeds to say:

> In other words, the police powers of the states were as broad as the reserved powers of the states. Had this liberal and logical position been consistently upheld by the Taney Court and its successors, the condition of the United States today would be very different from what it is, and we should not see the Supreme Court constantly ruling on purely local questions of street-car franchises, power rates, etc.

This forgets Taney's qualifying clause "except in so far as it has been restricted by the Constitution of the United States." Taney recognized that state police power was restricted by the commerce clause and the obligation-of-contracts clause. Mr. Bates knows that after Taney's time state police power was subjected to new restrictions by the Fourteenth Amendment. His failing here can hardly be excused merely because he is not a lawyer. It is due to the fact that he is an incompetent non-legal historian and an incompetent heeder of the meaning of judical language.

Mr. Bates has read widely in Beveridge, Beard, Corwin, Boudin, Myers, and Warren and has presented much of the fruit of his reading. His selection of cases for reporting is done with a good sense of the significant. Within his self-imposed limits he is a good reporter. He successfully maintains his thesis that the ruling forces of American society have been the ruling forces of American society. He makes it clear that the courts have not been unmindful of the Fathers' concern for the protection of property. He puts before the reader the major constitutional controversies that have come before the Supreme Court and he tells their outcome in so far as it can be told by the answer of the Court. If we could accept his belated avowal of not attempting to decide where responsibility lies, we could more readily look at his book from his own point of view.

Had Mr. Bates confined himself to the viewpoint of the non-lawyer, one would be tempted to view his work with tolerance. Unhappily he frequently makes comparisons on the basis of the Court's assumed canons and techniques, and he frequently blunders. So we have left of value chiefly the recital of numerous cases in which victory has gone to speculators, creditors, holders of grants obtained by bribery, employers, taxpayers, banks, corporations, railroads, and manufacturers, with occasional judicial lapses in favor of litigants on the other side. However partial and incomplete the accounting may be, here is food for thought. Mr. Bates gives us little thought beyond his recital and the repeated implication that the favors have gone to those who least deserved them. For a political tract, this may be enough. It has more substance than much of the froth of opposing tenor that other political tracts blow forth. Enough of it is solid and worthy of emphasis so that it is the greater pity that as a whole it can be recommended only to those already expert enough to be readily aware of its blemishes and its shortcomings.

Thomas Reed Powell is a member of the faculty of the Harvard Law School.

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Fusion's Interim Report

NEW YORK ADVANCING. By Rebecca B. Rankin. New York Municipal Reference Library. 1936. 50 *cents.*

Reviewed by CHARLES E. MERRIAM

ON the basis of the record it embodies, "New York Advancing" is the appropriate title of an interim report by the Fusion Administration to the citizens of the first city in the land. Accounting for their stewardship the departments and boroughs of the City of New York show that they are making good on Mayor LaGuardia's slogan, "To the victor belongs the responsibility for good government."

The recital of the achievements of the numerous officials, boards, departments, and committees is conveniently divided into eleven chapters, copiously illustrated and embracing these subjects: administration, finance, public works, taxation, education and recreation, legal protection, protection of life and property, public utilities, miscellaneous staff functions, emergency relief, and charter revision. Some attention is candidly given also to the failures of the Administration and where these have been due to want of proper coöperation within the government the record is honest enough to say so.

Mayor LaGuardia claims for the Fusion Experiment five distinctive merits: complete divorce of politics from administration, one hundred cents worth of public service for every tax dollar spent, protection to the under-privileged from neglect and exploitation characteristic of previous administrations, recognition of municipal responsibility in providing opportunities for music, art, and higher education, application of the most advanced scientific methods to municipal administration. Special emphasis is attached to the first and the last.

This is high praise for a municipal administration seriously to bestow upon itself, but the record is well documented. Of the integrity of purpose of the LaGuardia group there could hardly ever have been any doubt. The question is not whether they have gone in the right direction, but how far they have gone and how far they might reasonably have been expected to go. Here, as in so many other fields of public activity, the greatest obstacle to accurate and constructive evaluation of performance is the lack of dependable standards. This raises sharply the question of the objective measurement of efficiency in municipal administration—difficult enough even if norms were available. The situation is further complicated by the fact that the immense City of New York is in a class by itself.

But where standards are available the Fusionists have endeavored to apply them. What they do in the absence of accepted yardsticks is to compare their record with that of their immediate predecessors.

Attention of scientific students of government will be arrested mainly by these subjects: improvements in financial and tax administration, the effect of technological changes on public administration, the difficulties of insuring the community a square deal in public utilities, the quickening acceptance of administrative justice supplementing judicial justice, and the close relationship of good appointments to high achievement. For the general reader the most fascinating sections of the volume will probably be the reports of the city chamberlain (Berle), on the department of parks (Moses), on tenements and housing (Post), on corrections (MacCormick), on centralized purchasing (Forbes), and on investigation and accounts (Blanshard). Relatively little attention, surprisingly enough, is given to the problem of municipal personnel. This may be accounted for, however, by the publication at approximately the same time of the New York Municipal Civil Service Commission's separate report, "Civil Service Gains, 1935."

The greatest weakness of the volume is, however, that it does not adequately picture and evaluate the dynamic spirit of the administration and the heavy and persistent drive toward higher levels of municipal life in the nation's greatest city. I wish the book had less of the compiler and more of the interpreter and prophet. What New York needs is not alone a municipal encyclopedia of reform, but a bugle note of rejoicing and perhaps a blast of prophetic defiance—a tone of will as well as a color of wisdom.

Charles E. Merriam is chairman of the Department of Political Science of the University of Chicago.

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The Anisfield Award

THE Judges of the John Anisfield Award, Professor Henry Pratt Fairchild of New York University, Professor Donald Young of the Social Science Research Council, and Henry Seidel Canby of *The Saturday Review*, have the honor to announce the award of the annual prize of $1000.00 to Julian Huxley and A. C. Haddon for their book "We Europeans: A Survey of 'Racial' Problems. With a Contribution by A. M. Carr-Saunders" (Harpers). The prize is awarded each year under the sponsorship of *The Saturday Review* to "a sound and significant book published in the previous twelve months on the subject of racial relations in the contemporary world."

"We Europeans" is the latest of the syntheses of scientific knowledge concerning the significance of the concept of race which have appeared during recent decades in an impressive series of independent attacks on the racial interpretation of civilization.

The exceptional value of "We Europeans" may be in part ascribed to its timeliness with reference to the current wave of pseudo-scientific propaganda which summons a mythical "racial biology" in support of national, party, and class prejudices. Its timeliness, however, would have been without worth but for the thorough, comprehensive, and inescapably logical manner in which the authors have evaluated, sorted, and pieced together the scattered fragments of scientific evidence regarding the relationship of race and civilization. Their organizing and interpretative contributions have made of the fragments a unified whole far greater than the simple sum of its original parts. The selection of the present crucial European situation with regard to "racialism" and nationalism as the focus of the analysis has given this volume a utility far transcending that attainable in generalized discussions of the abstract concepts of race without impairing scientific standards.

That the conclusions of this study are negative in respect to the immediate importance of biological differences among human groups is cause for neither surprise nor regret. All previous competent analyses have come to similar negative conclusions. Once again it has been demonstrated that "Racialism is a myth, and a dangerous myth at that." Only those who need a "cloak for selfish economic aims" will not be convinced by the clear, non-technical, even-tempered marshalling of facts which amply support the conclusions.

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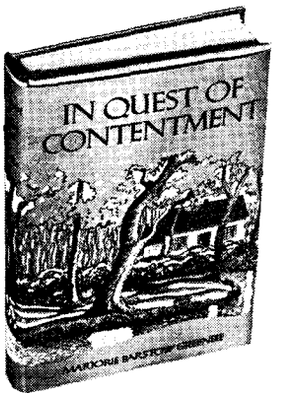
IN QUEST OF CONTENTMENT

By Marjorie Barstow Greenbie



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The PHŒNIX NEST

CONTEMPORARY POETRY: BY WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

BEFORE taking up *Genevieve Taggard's* book that I had meant to review last time, I wish to comment upon the death of *Harriet Monroe,* ever the staunch friend of American poetry. I hope her Chicago magazine, *Poetry,* will continue in her honor. I feel I can do no better than quote the words of a prominent American poet written to me at the time of her death:

> With all her acidity, her peppery rebukes, her mordant needle to deflate pride, she had a great place in the Art of Poetry in America. I am surprised to see so little reference to her in the magazines that come here. And she really believed her chastening rod or pen was of use to poets. She always refused to dictate her letters. They were painstakingly written long-hand because she thought poets, especially young beginners, liked to hear personally from the Editor. She too was a friend of many years. I have a complete file of *Poetry* from its beginning; having been a subscriber from the first. I had just had a long letter from her before she sailed for Argentina, filled with girlish enthusiasm for her trip . . . Poor little woman, dying among strangers in a strange land!

Harriet Monroe was a woman of high courage and I salute her passing. In the differences of opinion that make the practice of literature lively, I not infrequently found myself in disagreement with her criticisms and general ideas; but I always respected her courage and felt that she was doing and had done a work for poets such as no other human being in America had accomplished.

I'm glad *Wallace Stevens* has won the *Nation's* Poetry Prize for 1936. His poem, "The Men That Are Falling," was chosen by the editors of *The Nation* from nearly two thousand poems entered in the contest, and has appeared in their Fall Book Number. Mr. Stevens has consistently avoided any publicity, and about all one knows concerning him is that he was born in 1879 in Reading, Penn., was graduated from Harvard, is a lawyer in Hartford, Connecticut, is married, and has one child. His first volume, "Harmonium," came out in 1923, and more recently Knopf has reissued his new volume, "Ideas of Order," originally published in a limited edition by the Alcestis Press. On November 1st the Alcestis Press will publish his "Owl's Clover."

In Genevieve Taggard's "Calling Western Union" she takes a defiant stand. She has become sincerely proletarian. She says she has "seen the huts of dream squalid in a waste place," advises a rose to read Marx, and likes "Fearing Sq., because it's so central." When she writes against a certain type of poet in "Funeral in May" her scorn exceeds that of the most extreme philistine. It puts me on the side of the poet. The majority of poets I have known, even under hated capitalism, have been pretty fine people who asked no quarter, and, naturally enough, got none. Dunt esk. I should think so long a poem might better pillory something more than a super-esthete.

From earlier books "Try Tropic" (a poem whose subtitle has now been changed to "For a Sick Generation") and "Everyday Alchemy" are very good; and there are some arresting poems begot of Miss Taggard's new faith: "A Middle-Aged, Middle-Class Woman at Midnight," "Community," "O People Misshapen," "Up State-Depression Summer," "Feeding the Children," "Life of the Mind, 1934," "Four Frescoes of the Future," and "Lark." The book is very much alive. I found also extremely interesting her autobiographical preface. As to the interspersed notes and a certain tone to some of the other poems—she seems to be making an explanation of herself to a party, a contingent. She seems to be saying, "Even though I'm a poet, I'm on your side and I want to be read by you, and I want to show you where I fit in, and I very much wish the *nihil obstat.*" That is a general impression. But one is also reckoning with a very gallant person. Her own vision of what she is fighting for flies above that of most like an eagle. I wish she hadn't changed the last line of "Swimming Elm Avenue," and she can do a poem like "Flute in Late Summer" so well—she will think I like only poems that have originally appeared in *The Saturday Review of Literature*—that I wish she'd do more of them. They have got at her too much with program matters. They have made her say:

> *The battle of the mind,*
> *Tranquillity, too, the kind,*
> *Quick teacher's face, the jest,*
> *Keen argument with a friend,*
> *That sport and the sweet zest,*
> *All fall, must fall, behind,*
> *That time is at an end.*

Granting the superb last line of that poem, what is quoted above is one of the most Puritanic utterances I have ever heard, and if it possibly could be so, it would usher in the world of a new Cotton Mather. The things mentioned above are not, as she conceives them, means whereby to "die of sloth." They are the life of the spirit.

Obviously it is only because Miss Taggard is possessed of such high idealism that she suddenly becomes as strict as a school-marm. Actually she is not anything like a school-marm, and is possssssed of a hearty sense of humor. She is also a fighter; and her versatility has too little been remarked upon. Her "The Life and Mind of Emily Dickinson" was a notable biography, her anthology "Circumference," and her work with Dudley Fitts on "Ten Introductions" to younger poets, as well as her book reviews, have displayed a lively critical sense; and some of her poetry will not easily fade.

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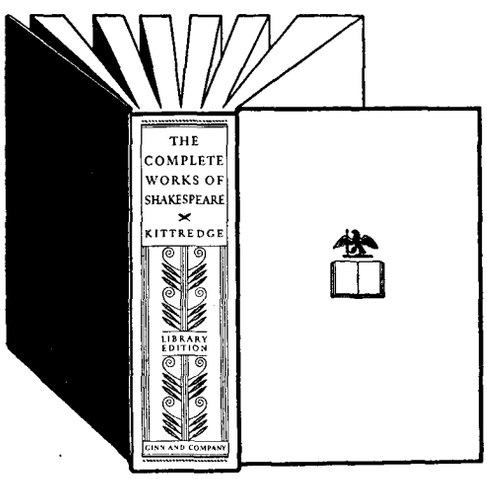

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Grace Flandrau's Stories of Africa

UNDER THE SUN. By Grace Flandrau. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1936. $2.50.

Reviewed by KATHARINE SIMONDS

IN writing these short stories set in the great forests of the Congo basin, Mrs. Flandrau has wisely not attempted to plumb native psychology; she has chosen instead to show what happens to white people when they are confronted with the primitive. She has dealt "not only with these more or less recently explored regions and their inhabitants, but with the even less explored regions of human beings in general."

For all these civilized people of whom she writes, the loneliness and strangeness of Africa, the absence of any cerebration among the natives, has accentuated their weaknesses, but also made them for a moment be still and acknowledge, if not a god, at least the voice of their inner consciousness.

Thus, Mrs. Flandrau's characters are seen always at an instant of bitter self-realization. American Eva, alone in Africa with her brilliant, alien, demanding husband, aware of his need for her, against which his will fought, of her pregnancy, of a man dying nearby, wanted for the first time to relax, to allow all these natural processes to work themselves out without the intervention of her mind. Shallow, pretty Mrs. Meuchner, reserved, straitlaced, came to life in the presence of a young savage chief. Under the blandishments of black women and brown brandy, Du Valois, "a young man of good family," ceased to struggle against his laziness and weakness, until Belgium and ambition and the pale Helene became a chill distant dream.

In two of her stories, Mrs. Flandrau has returned to a character which she has used before; the weak man who envies the strong, somewhat because of his success, but more for his simple good qualities which make the envious seem mean even to himself. For both weak men, the moment came, hastened and intensified by Africa, at which they could no longer endure the supremacy of the strong. Walcott saved himself by sacrificing his life to Brant, partly to have the upper hand for once, partly to convince himself that he had known what it is to love. Van Meir saved himself by killing Harvey. Neither wholly succeeded because neither could be single-minded even in his obsessions.

Mrs. Flandrau has done a very honest job, neither romanticizing nor satirizing characters or background. She wants to show people as they are, with all their sins upon them, tolerable only because of the anguish which is a condition of all thinking life. Unfortunately she is not quite a good enough writer to make her characters important, nor does she ever transport her reader to the fabulous lands she herself has visited. In her exploration of Africa and the human heart alike she has seen much, but she brings back only a report, not an illusion. Though her themes are important, her stories are not; depth and range are missing.

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Printing in America

A HISTORY OF PRINTING IN THE UNITED STATES. By Douglas C. McMurtrie. Vol. II, Middle and South Atlantic States. New York: R. R. Bowker Co. 1936. $6.

THE written record of printing in the United States starts with the "History of Printing in America" which was compiled and issued by Isaiah Thomas, printer, and founder of the American Antiquarian Society, in 1810. In 1874, under the direction of a committee of the Association, Joel Munsell of Albany printed a second edition of Thomas, with the latter's notes. And finally in 1921, in the transactions of the Society appeared William McCullogh's Notes to Thomas. Expanding the subject, American scholars, like Eames, Brigham, Hildeburn, Ford, Wroth, and others, have prepared monographs on definite towns, states, or periods, and many of these are still invaluable. To the long list of such separate essays, Mr. McMurtrie has contributed for many years the results of his independent investigations of the beginnings of printing in America, in the form of articles in the scholarly journals, and of printed volumes.

In 1929 the author announced the publication at a future date of such a history as has now made its appearance in a volume (numbered II in the series) devoted to the press in the Atlantic colonies. The beginnings of the press in New England in 1638 will be treated in a future volume: the present one takes up the founding of the second press in British North America, at Jamestown, Virginia, in 1682, by James Buckner. The abortive beginning in Maryland in the same year is followed by the first presses in Pennsylvania in 1685 and in New York in 1693, and, during the early eighteenth century, by printing-offices in the other colonies. The present volume includes such major topics as William Bradford and his activities in New York and Pennsylvania, Benjamin Franklin as a printer, the famous Zenger case for freedom of the press in New York, and much new information about the press in the Carolinas and Georgia.

The issues of these early presses were predominantly legal and governmental, with newspapers, almanacs, and sermons following. The type, paper and presses were all imported from Europe, and the style of printing was imported too—and lost something of its quality in the journey. The printers were usually urged or bribed by government to set up shop, but were as like as not to be pestered and hampered in the conduct of their offices by the same authority. "Freedom of the press" was not expected nor allowed. Under the circumstances—annoying interference, difficulty in procuring type and paper and workmen, a poor and thin population—it is surprising to find how much printing was really accomplished, and even, in some cases, of a fairly high order of merit as printing.

In the preparation of this volume the author has made use of his own extensive researches, as well as of material published by others. In addition he has had the valuable assistance of certain scholars in reading the proofs: the result seems to be a volume which will take its place as the authority on the history of printing in America for many years to come, the first consecutive narrative history for a century and a quarter. The literary style leaves something to be desired in the way of simplicity and charm: but the amount of detail to be handled in such a work perhaps precludes a more entertaining style.

The present volume consists of nearly five hundred pages. There are adequate bibliographical and textual notes, placed at the end of the book, but no index—a matter which will doubtless be attended to in the final volume. The general plan of the book is excellent.

In view of the fine American-made type which Isaiah Thomas used in his book, it is disappointing to find a not-so-good form of a renaissance letter used for printing Mr. McMurtrie's volume: without stressing the matter too much, there are two or three good faces of type designed in America which would have gone well with the subject. The illustrations are of important pieces of primitive American printing, reproduced as line photo-engravings — there are not too many of them. The binding is in stout buckram.

This is the most important work on printing by an American which has appeared since Updike's "Printing Types," and it will take its place on the shelf beside that work. It is a great pleasure to be able to record the publication of the first volume of a work long awaited, and to be assured of the completion of the remaining three volumes of the work within a short time.

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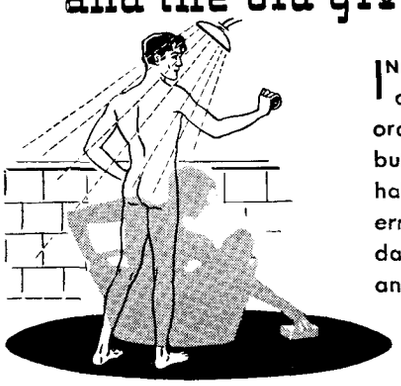

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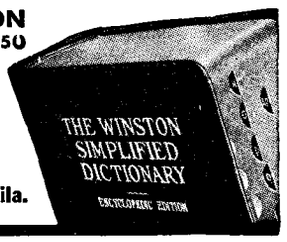

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The New Books

Fiction

EGGS AND BAKER. By John Masefield. Macmillan. 1936. $2.50.

The present Poet Laureate of England is one of the few contemporary poets who has also proved himself a good novelist. His best novels are those of the sea, such as "The Bird of Dawning." The one before us is interesting though of minor importance, save that it gives a good picture of the fate of a homespun reformer in a small English village in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Mr. Masefield has not forgotten his poem, "A Consecration," which stands at the front of his collected work, in which he dedicated his art to "The men with the broken heads and the blood running into their eyes." Here he writes of two simple and religious souls, the local baker, Mansell, and his wife; of their friend the radical, Adolf Engels; of their son, Bob; and of their fight for social justice and against the horrible slums of the village of Condicate. It is Mansell's final championship of the cause of the village idiot, named the Magpie, who is indicted and executed along with the real criminal for the murder of a gamekeeper, which brings about his imprisonment. His "agitating" activities have meanwhile set all the powerful and smug of the village against him. The slum is the plague spot of the town and the breeding ground of criminals; yet the landed proprietors are so powerful, convention and *laissez faire* so strong, and public opinion so blind and cruel that even the baker's prayerful efforts—and he is full of prayer—lead almost to his destruction. The "happy ending" is rather tacked on, after the ruin and imprisonment of the baker and the effort his wife and son make to establish a small restaurant in another place. The account of the trial in Tatchester is the best part of the book. The whole is a deeply humane picture of dark times. W. R. B.

CLUTCH AND DIFFERENTIAL. By George Weller. Random House. 1936. $2.50.

Mr. Weller's "Not to Eat, Not for Love" was a very interesting novel, because it contained more information about life in Harvard University than any one else ever got into 350 pages. This new book—the publishers call it a novel, which presupposes a loose definition—is actually a collection of stories, given a certain unity by a good deal of vague emphasis on sex, and by a collection of remarks, preceding each chapter, on driving automobiles. We gather that there is a connection between automobiles and sex. Just what else may be meant by the insistent symbolism of clutch and differential is left implicit, and the book is not sufficiently interesting to make us want to figure it out. Any book by so accurate an observer of behavior as Mr. Weller is bound to have good stuff in it; several of the episodes here are excellent, particularly one in which two correspondence-course salesmen meet and wrangle over their territory. But the episodes become monotonous because they are all observations of behavior. Every time we get interested in a group of characters, they disappear and we have to begin all over again with another group, usually in a different place, preceded by another paragraph of information about automobiles. And most of the time the new episode is another variation on the theme of sex, which few of the characters seem to enjoy very much; the sexual behavior is undifferentiated, and seldom goes into the clutch. A casual reader of "Clutch and Differential" would say that it doesn't get anywhere; for a reviewer who began it hopefully and read it carefully, that just about sums it up. G. S.

THE STONES AWAKE. By Carleton Beals. Lippincott. 1936. $2.50.

This novel is a dramatization of the revolutions of Mexico from the rise of Madero (and the more famous but less important Pancho Villa) in 1910 to the present administration of Cárdenas. It is popularized modern history. The most exciting history you could read.

We doubt if any one, coming to this book fresh, without any knowledge of Mexico, will realize how thoroughly authentic, how well documented it is. It is all of Beals's books on Mexico put into the story of an Indian woman, Esperanza, who grows with the agrarian struggles until she comes to the center in Mexico City, seeing the whole picture in the series of revolutions, which the people across the border in our country have always considered merely as butts for jokes.

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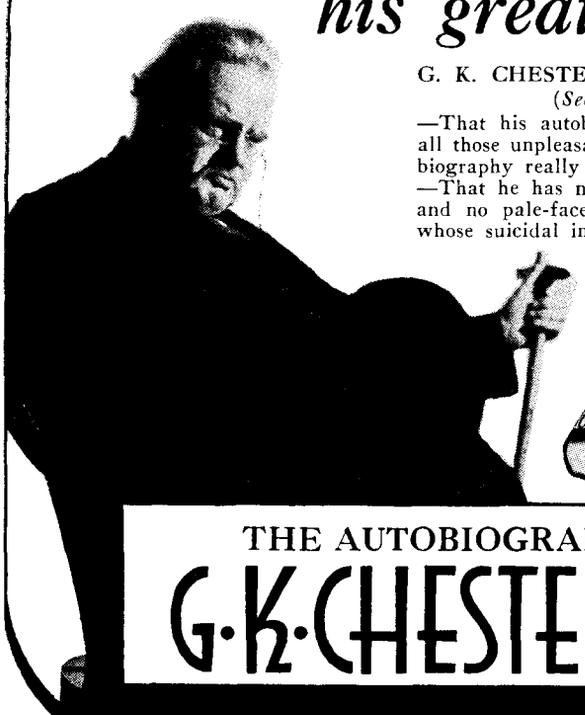

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(*See page 22*)
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Henry Seidel Canby
in The Saturday Review:

This is the best popular book on gems which we have seen. It is written by the curator of minerals and gems at the American Museum of Natural History, and combines in happy fashion the complete mineralogical background of precious and semi-precious stones with enough of the fascinating history of gems to make the book much more than a manual of cuttable stones. There is an appendix with bibliography and tables of hardness and also an opening chapter on the cutting of stones, and very fine illustrations of cut gems—some in color—and of carved jade and other precious stones. This should be an excellent book for the small library since it covers accurately a wide field.

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Curator of Minerals and Gems, American Museum of Natural History.
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cross-purposes and selfish ambitions of politicians and generals deterred but never fully stifled it. The book will be startling to some, for it is frank to the point of being an exposé; some will not understand the rash, emotional characters of Mexican Indians when aroused; the colossal greed of haciendeiros and generals; or why a group of painters, among the finest who are actually living today, should become embroiled in politics: with all these characters, Esperanza comes in contact. Her experiences are woven into the fabric of the struggle. There is nothing fanciful about the plot, or her part in it. It is so authentic it is hard to detect the fiction.

H. B.

History

DEAR DARK HEAD. By Helen Landreth. Whittlesey House. 1936. $2.75.

Irish history is disastrous and reveals no clear progress. But it has a distinction that is unshared by the histories of other western European nations: it goes back unbrokenly to the early iron age and gives us glimpses of an earlier epoch. A pastoral civilization that is by no means rude makes the scene and the people of early Irish history very attractive. "O Cormac, grandson of Conn," says the young Prince in the colloquy quoted in this book, "What are the sweetest things you have ever heard?" "Not hard to tell. The shout of triumph after victory, praise after labor, a lady's invitation to her pillow." The sayings, the poems, the personalities, the handicraft suggest that the gods had planned a brilliant future for the country, but that something went wrong after the tenth century.

Miss Landreth makes no pretence of writing Irish history; she writes the romance of Irish history, history as it became reflected in the minds of legend-makers. "Dear Dark Head" (one is sorry that a title so sentimental is used, a title, too, that has no warrant in ancient tradition) comes out of the tradition that was made and fostered by Moore's Irish melodies. Read in the mood of "The Minstrel Boy" or "The Harp That Once," "Dear Dark Head is a worth-while book. It gives an outline of happenings in Ireland in the last thousand years and enough of the tradition dealt with by present-day poets, dramatists, and story-tellers to permit the average student to comprehend their background and relationships. Miss Landreth should have given a more extended account of the Finn saga: unless one gets a sense of its ramifications one does not understand the influence of this body of prose and poetry in Scotland as well as in Ireland. And Miss Landreth is rather misleading when she names the Scandinavians in Ireland as Danes—they were Norse: they were settlers as well as raiders as the place-names on the eastern seaboard show as well as many names of conspicuous Irish people—Sigurson, Casement, Kettle, and that common first-name, Manus. If she had drawn on the Icelandic saga about "Brian's battle" she could have made that attempt of Earl Sigur to set himself up as king in Ireland much more dramatic.

P. C.

Miscellaneous

CANARY: THE HISTORY OF A FAMILY. By Gustav Eckstein. Harpers. 1936. $2.50.

It does not seem possible that Mr. Eckstein's accounts of his canaries can be true. We suppose they are, for the details are convincing. But if so, he has got more out of the canary than his fellow scientists out of any research that we know of. This family of canaries which he bred so casually in a laboratory becomes a group of sharply marked individuals, very human in their traits, almost superhuman in their devotion to art. Some of the accounts of Father's singing could be shifted into a musical critic's column with only a few changes, and before you finish the book you have got as excited about Striped Daughter and Nigger and Crusty and Hinge and all the rest as if they were people in a humorous character novel. "Canaries Are People" might be the title of this book, and Mr. Eckstein makes us believe that they are. He has a light and graceful style which is suited for this study of the musical behavior of the most professional musician among birds.

H. S. C.

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Trade Winds

BY P. E. G. QUERCUS

The National Book Fair

OLD QUERCUS and his Associates look forward eagerly to the NATIONAL BOOK FAIR at Rockefeller Center. This energetic and colorful show, vigorously planned and organized by the *New York Times* and the National Association of Book Publishers, will be open to the public by the time this Trade Winds reaches its readers. (It was not open, however, when this copy went to press; so the Q. Associates can report at first hand only on the carpentry and décor, which they saw in progress. We were impressed by the fact that the exhibits will be well arranged, easy to look at; numerous small rooms, all various and inviting, instead of a monotonous long hall.) ☞There is to be a private view on Wednesday evening Nov. 4, at which Messrs. Sulzberger and Adler of the *Times* will sponsor the enterprise; Mayor LaGuardia will scissor a symbolic ribbon of binder's tape and declare the Fair open; Messrs. Rinehart and Reynal, for the N. A. B. P., will then lead the tour of inspection. The Fair will be open to the public beginning noon on November 5, and will continue for two weeks.

☞The visting hours are: Mondays to Fridays, noon to 10 p.m. Saturdays 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Sundays, 2 to 6 p.m. The admission fee is 25 cents. The forenoon hours on Mondays to Fridays are reserved for groups of students and school classes who have made authorized arrangement beforehand. For such groups admission is free, but their teachers must make application to the *New York Times*.

☞To recapitulate, there is full reason to believe that the Book Fair will be of exceptional interest and allure. The idea was first taken up by contagion from the distinguished success in recent years of a similar trade festival in London. It has already spread from New York to Los Angeles and Toronto. In the New York fair, under the spirited initiative of the *Times* and the zealous participation of the N. A. B. P. and many committees and individuals (booksellers, printers, librarians, collectors, and experts in all the allied trades) no less than 74 publishing firms are offering exhibits. There will be a special Information Service for all kinds of inquiries, rare MSS and books on show (including a vellum copy of the Gutenberg Bible from the J. P. Morgan collection, the Boswell journals describing the tour to the Hebrides with Dr. Johnson, from Colonel Isham's collection, etc., etc.) and many carefully arranged exhibits of historical and technical interest.

☞Beginning November 5 there will be talks every afternoon at 3 p.m. and every evening at 8.15 p.m. (3 p.m. only on Sundays) for which distinguished authors and artists have volunteered their services. ☞A high spot for public attention is sure to be the actual exhibit of paper and book making in process. The Franklin Institute of Philadelphia has sent over its miniature paper-making machine, which performs the manufacture of bookpaper from a "soup" of shredded woodpulp to the completed roll of paper (8 inches wide) which emerges at the rate of 5 feet per minute. ☞The operations of linotype composition, printing, folding, sewing and casing-in will all be performed on the spot; a small book about books, prepared for the Fair, will be partly printed and manufactured on the spot, and available to visitors as a souvenir. ☞We understand that with the exception of this bibelot, books will not be sold at the Fair. Orders may be placed for books to be supplied later through outside booksellers.

☞The individual publishing houses have arranged exhibits of much originality and charm; many of them offer unusual souvenirs obtained by competitive chance or wit. There will be a Literary Living Room furnished by the interior decorating department of R. H. Macy & Co.,* and a Modern Bookshop showing 5000 selected volumes.

☞The show is held in the North International Building on Fifth Avenue, immediately opposite St. Patrick's Cathedral (50th Street).

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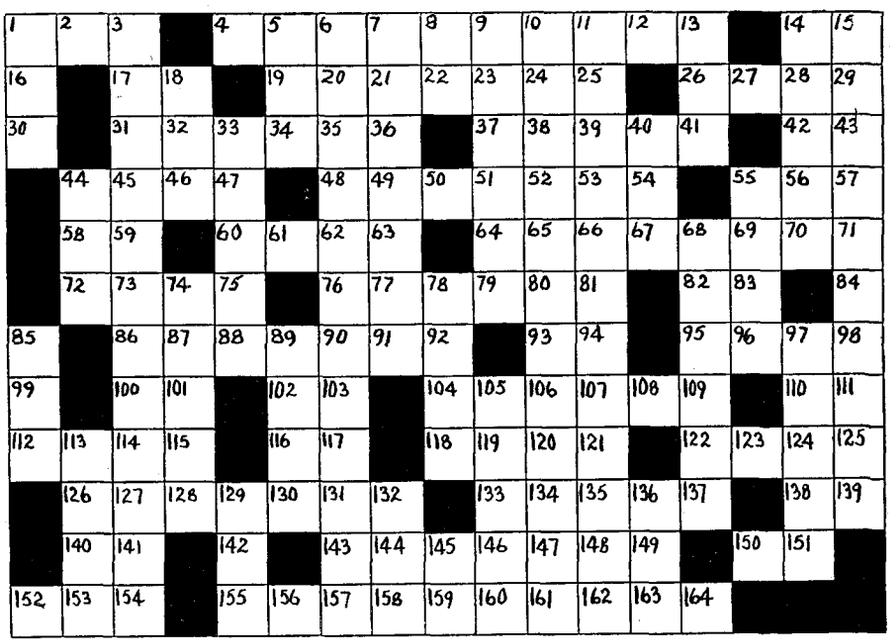
Double-Crostics: No. 137

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY



DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle, you must guess twenty-four words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Unless otherwise indicated, the author is English or American.

The solution of last week's *Double-Crostic* will be found on page 23 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

I. Authoritative determination.

II. Said indistinctly.

III. Excessively.

IV. A twist; a turn.

V. Supercilious intellectual.

VI. Having a reddish glow.

VII. A pearl of great lustre.

VIII. Obscure person.

IX. Careless.

X. Augury.

XI. Lump of precious metal.

XII. Across.

XIII. Birthplace of Dr. Johnson.

XIV. Boorish; awkward.

XV. Poetic form.

XVI. Friend of Dr. Johnson.

XVII. English poet (1700-1748).

XVIII. Heroine of the "Lady of the Lake."

XIX. Bewilder.

XX. Equably.

XXI. Corrected; vindicated.

XXII. Medusa's sister.

XXIII. Airing.

XXIV. Egyptian goddess personifying the heavens.

WORDS

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55 130 140 69 138 112 142 52 117

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116 51 105 72 7 98 132

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28 88 148 77 102 82 121

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149 124 152 150 29 93 56 118

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35 129 151 40 101 81 162 54 85

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161 136 15 110 109 45 143 49

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127 113 47 156

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128 20 37 71 34 87

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137 78 144 53 31 38 120 21 57

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19 6 62 76 41 135 104 145

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91 11 24 66 147 108

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48 2 61 17 125 50 94

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159 99 107 73 68

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84 18 86 1 106 4 164

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30 158 131 26 64 154

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160 12 97 126 22 111 63

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92 58 119 103 83 139

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8 23 163 114 96 60

__ __ __
70 155 75

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Gillette
Gillet(t)
Gill(i)am
Gill(e)s
Gill(i)man
Gilmore
Gilmour
Gilmer
Glasgow
Gleason
Gleeson
Glen(n)
Glover
Goddard
Godfrey
Goff
Good(e)
Goodman
Goodrich
Goodwin
Gordon
Gorham
Gough
Gould
Graham
Grant
Graves
Gray—Grey
Green(e)
Greenwood
Greer—Grier
Griffin
Griffith
Grinnell
Griswold
Grover
Grove(s)
Grubb(s)
Gurney
Guthrie
Gwynn—Gwinn
Hacker
Haddock
Hadley
Hager
Haggard
Haines
Hale
Haley
Hall
Hallowell
Halsey
Halste(a)d
Hamilton
Hamlin
Hammond
Hampton
Hancock
Hand
Han(d)ley
Hank(e)s
Hardin—Harden
Harding
Hardy—Hardie
Haring
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Harris
Harrison
Hart
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Harwood
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Hathaway
Hawkins
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Hawley
Hayden
Hayes—Hay(s)
Haynes
Hayward
Haz(e)ard
Heal(e)y
Heard
Heath
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Henkel—Henkle
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Hitchcock
Hite—Hight
Hoag—Hoge
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Hulbert
Hurlbu(r)t
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Humphrey(s)
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Ingersoll
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Janes
Jarvis
Jeffrey—Jeffery
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Jenkins
Jennings
Jewell
Jewett
John(s)
Johnson
Jones
Jordan
Joy
Joyce
Judd
Julian
Kane—Kain(e)
Kearney
Keeler
Keen(e)
Kean(e)
Keith
Keller—Kellar
Kell(e)y
Kellogg
Kemp
Kendall
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Kent
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Kirby—Kerby
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Knight
Knott
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Lambert
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Lewis
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Lill(e)y—Lillie
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Ludlow
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M(a)cDougall
M(a)cFarland
M(a)cFarlane
M(a)cGregor
M(a)cKay
M(a)cKenzie
M(a)cLean
M(a)cLeod
M(a)cMahon
M(a)cMurray
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Tudor
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Underwood
Upham
Upton
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Van Buren
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Van Dyke
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Van Horn(e)
Van Meter
Van Ness
Vaugh(a)n
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Vinton
Wadsell
Wade
Wadsworth
Wagner
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Wagener
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Wakefield
Waldo
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Walker
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Wallace
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Warden
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Warwick
Washburn(e)
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Waterman
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Weaver
Webb
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Wellman
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Wetmore
Whaley
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Wheeler
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Whitfield
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Whitman
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Whittlesey
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Willis
Willoughby
Wills
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Winchester
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Winn(e)
Winslow
Winston
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Witt
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Wolcott
Wolf(e)—Wolff
Woodbury
Woodcock
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Wood(s)
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Woof(l)ey
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Worden
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Wray
Wren(n)
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